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A HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

AND OF THE CHIEF ENGLISH WRITERS, FOUNDED UPON THE MANUAL OF THOMAS B. SHAW.

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PREFACE TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

THE attempt of the editor in the new edition of *The Student's English Literature* has been to bring the work as far as possible into line with contemporary and authoritative criticism, to harmonise previous editions, especially with regard to the final part of the book, and to provide a manual which, while supplying the ordinary student with necessary facts, may also be of use to the more advanced student and to lovers of English literature generally. The subject, since Mr. Shaw's original work was written, has assumed such important proportions, and the number of authorities is become so incredibly greater, that much that was then matter-of-fact and current criticism is now obsolete. The book, therefore, has been rewritten completely; and, while the editor has endeavoured to retain, with as little alteration as possible, all that was most characteristic of the original author's thought and style—as, for example, in the chapters on Shakespeare and Milton—much of it is of necessity entirely new. All facts and dates have been carefully and scrupulously verified by comparison with the most recent authorities; and, although it is more than possible that, in so wide a field, some errors may have been overlooked, yet it is believed that the student will find the manual accurate and trustworthy in this respect. The second chapter, on Chaucer, has been rewritten by Professor W. P. Ker. The editor wishes to thank Mr. J. Cooke, of Dublin, and Mr. H. W. Law for the care with which they have read over the proofs of the book, and the valuable advice and help which they have given him in the prosecution of his task.

LINCOLN, *May* 1901.

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ENGLISH LITERATURE.

CHAPTER I.

THE ORIGIN OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE.

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§ 1. WITHIN the limited territory comprised by a portion of the British Isles has grown up a language which has become the speech of the most free, most energetic, and most powerful section of the human race, and bids fair to be, at no distant period, the universal medium of communication throughout the globe. Its literature, inferior to none in variety or extent, is superior to all others in its robustness and universality of scope, and has exerted a great and continually increasing influence upon the progress of human thought and the improvement of human happiness. To trace the rise and formation of such a language cannot be otherwise than interesting and instructive.

The most ancient inhabitants of the British Islands of whom we have any certain information were a branch of that Celtic race which appears to have once occupied a large part of Western Europe. Although the causes and period of their immigrations into Europe are lost in prehistoric tradition, these Celts, in their two divisions of Gaels (*i.e.* strangers, whence Gaul and Wales, *le pays de Galles*) and Cymry, seem to have covered a very large extent of territory, and, in their Druidical worship, their astronomical science, and many other features, to have retained strong traces of a remote Oriental descent. The Cymric or Briton immigration

Celtic Britain.

was later than the Gaelic. The Gaelic Celts seem to have conquered the obscure people of the Neolithic age (whose descendants the Picts are supposed to have been), and were in their turn absorbed by the second Celtic invaders. It is far from probable, however, that the Cymric race ever attained more than the lowest degree of civilisation. We know little of its history. The Cimbri whom we meet in the later wars of the Roman Republic, were another race, and must not be confused with this savage and barbarous race of strangers. But we may be certain that its condition was very little superior to barbarism—a nomadic and predatory mode of existence, the absence of agriculture, and that infallible sign of a savage state, the universal habit of tattooing and staining the body, are sufficient proof of a low civilisation. Whether the Phœnicians, the traders of antiquity, ever extended their navigation to Britain, is a doubtful matter; at all events, their expeditions were confined to the tin-mines of the Cornish peninsula, and there is no ground for supposing that the influence of these more polished strangers could have effected much with the great body of the Celtic population.

Phœnician influence in Britain.

§ 2. The beginning of any intercourse between the primitive Britons and a foreign nation was the Roman invasion in 55 B.C. Julius Cæsar, having subdued the Gallic tribes of France, found himself on the shores of the Channel and within sight of the white cliffs of Albion, and naturally desired to push his conquests into the region inhabited by a people whom the Romans considered as dwelling at the very ends of the earth—"penitus toto divisos orbe Britannos." The customs of the country were much the same as those of Gaul: its religious and political institutions differed very little. The likeness of the dialects of both countries may be seen by comparing the modern Breton language with Welsh or the extinct Cornish tongue. The Briton was, however, a more difficult foe, and it took the greater part of a century to overpower him. At last the superior skill and military organisation of the Roman armies prevailed: the country became a Roman province, and the whole of England and the Scottish Lowlands, from the Straits of Dover and the Channel to the Firth of Forth, came under Roman domination —the mountain fastnesses of Wales excepted. This state of things lasted for about 480 years. A large body of Roman troops was permanently quartered in the new province: cities of the first rank rose in many parts of the kingdom, and were connected by first-class military roads, which still exist. The most important of these was Ermine Street, the Old North Road of to-day, which ran from Newhaven, or some station near it, to York, by way of London, Stamford, Ancaster, Lincoln, and a ferry across the Humber, some distance above Hull. Beyond York it was continued

The Roman occupation.

Roman roads in Britain.

by a road through Boroughbridge to Catterick-on-Swale (where it is now called Leeming Lane), and northwards through the county of Durham, until, near Hexham, it joined Hadrian's defensive wall, which is still to be traced from the Tyne to the Solway. Obviously, this road would be crossed by many others—*e.g.* at Royston in Hertfordshire it met the Icknield Way (Via Icenorum), which crossed England from the east to the west; and twenty miles or so farther on, at Huntingdon, it met the road which connected the two great cities of Colchester (Camulodunum) and Chester (Deva)—the Via Devana. Chester, again, was at the head of Watling Street, the modern Holyhead Road. York itself was a most important place, and there is a very generally received legend that Constantine the Great was born there.

Thus, by means of such communication, the country became Latinised, like the other side of the Channel. Latin became the civilised language. The Celts of the Welsh and Cumbrian borders and the Picts of Scotland, whose mountains were inaccessible to the Roman arms, retained their tribal peculiarities, and waged war upon the civilised provinces that had adopted Roman customs. But even the language of these savages, which in subsequent ages became a wonderful and flexible literary medium, received the impress of Rome. They re-adapted the Roman names of places for themselves, although these had been borrowed, almost without exception, from older British forms. Thus the Roman name of the modern Manchester was Mancunium, the first syllable of which was taken from the British *maen* = a stone. In Welsh this was turned literally into the word Manceinion. And in modern Welsh words there is a distinct remnant of Latinism hidden beneath the essentially local exterior. But these tribes remained hostile, forming a class distinct from their civilised brethren. The great Northumbrian wall, with its numerous military towns, was constructed to hinder Pictish incursions. So that when the Roman troops were withdrawn from Britain to protect the falling Western Empire against its barbarian enemies, we can easily comprehend the position of the Romanised section of the population. They had lost, in all probability, their original valour; they had acquired the vices of servitude at a period when vice was the open shame of all classes of Roman society and the Empire was a mere toy in the hands of any aspiring master of the palace; and, under these circumstances, they found themselves exposed to the furious incursions of hungry barbarians, eager to recover what they considered as their birthright, and bitterly angry with their degenerate countrymen, as traitors and cowards who had basely submitted to a foreign yoke. The avenging swarms of Scots and Picts swept down into the Lowlands and began to take their awful vengeance upon their unhappy countrymen.

The Latinising of Britain.

Departure of the Romans.

They destroyed almost every trace of civilisation; the furious devastation which they carried through the land is commemorated in the ancient Cymric songs and legends. Their unfortunate victims, after sending a piteous appeal to Rome in vain, took the dangerous but necessary alternative of inviting some warlike race of foreign adventurers to protect them. These adventurers were the Saxon pirates.

§ 3. We have just called attention to the Latin element in one of the Celtic dialects. These dialects, of which the existing British forms are the Welsh of the Principality, the Gaelic of the Highlands, and the nearly identical Erse of Ireland, have no affinity whatever with modern English. An Englishman has the utmost difficulty in learning Welsh, which presents him with the problems of an Oriental or Slavonic language —it does not answer his conception of a language at all. It is in all respects a completely different tongue; and so insignificant has been its influence upon English that, out of the enormous number of words composing our vocabulary, it would be difficult to point out a hundred which are the direct offspring of the Celtic tongue. It is true that the English language contains a considerable number of words which may ultimately be traced to Celtic roots, but many of these are probably due to a French medium and spring from a Breton source. The same remark applies to that Latin element which is so prominent in English. The Latin words, which constitute three-fifths of our language, cannot in any instance be proved to have derived their origin from any corrupt Latin *patois* spoken in Britain: many of them seem to have been filtered through some of the various forms of the Romance speech, the parent of French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese. Yet, if the Celtic element in our language is scanty, one class of words takes us back to the Brito-Roman age—the place-names which, in Wales, the Scottish Highlands, and Ireland, among a pure and unmixed population, have remained unaltered from a very remote period. In Wales, for instance, the names of certain places remain, in pronunciation and orthography, much as they existed even before Julius Cæsar's invasion. Some places have suffered changes of spelling—thus Merioneth, Pembroke, Carmarthen, Glamorgan, are substantially the Norman versions of Meirionydd, Penfro, Caerfyrddin, and Morganwg: other names, like Trefaldwyn, the local name for Montgomery, are simply translations, and in the French of the eleventh century would read thus—Villebaudouin. In Scotland we have Anglicised most words: in Ireland we have adopted a phonetic system of spelling: *e.g.* Dublin = Dubhlinn, or the name Leary = Laoghaire. Drogheda adheres much more closely to the old form. But that the names survive almost perfectly is unquestionable. Even in those parts of the country which have suffered from the inundations of various peoples, many ancient and purely Celtic appellations remain. The

Influence of Celtic and Latin tongues on English.

termination "*don*" is in some instances the Celtic word "*dun*," a rock or natural fortress. And in Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, and Warwickshire, we find a river Avon—one of them in Saxon times the important boundary between Mercia and Wessex—which is simply the English phonetic version of the Welsh *afon*, a river. The Dore of Derbyshire, and its neighbour the Derwent, are derived from the Celtic *dwr*, the modern Welsh for water—found also in the Douro, the Dora, and other foreign rivers. Ouse, too, so common a river-name in England, is similarly a variation of another Celtic word for water, and so on. Notice, too, our relics of Latin words in our numerous *chesters*, *e.g.* Manchester, Rochester, Silchester. Winchester, in its first syllable, retains the Roman name Venta, which translates the Celtic Gwent. The Isle of Wight is really G-wight, from the Roman Vectis, the *v* being easily interchangeable with *w*. Stony Stratford, on Watling Street, recalls the Strata, or paved roads of Roman times. The same word is found in the Welsh *ystrad*: *e.g.* Ystrad Farchell, in Flintshire, is the Celtic version of Strata Marcelli—Marcellus' road. Lin-coln = Lindum-colonia, and Porchester, at the mouth of Portsmouth Harbour, is a translation of Castra Portus—Havencamp, as we might say in the Teutonic manner.

The Teutonic invasion.

§ 4. The true foundations of the English laws, language, and national character were laid, during the century from 450 to 550 A.D., deep in the solid granite of Teutonic antiquity. The piratical adventurers whom the old German passion for plunder and glory, joined with the entreaties of "the miserable Britons," allured across the North Sea from the bleak shores of their native Jutland, Schleswig, Holstein, and the Baltic seaboard, were the most fearless navigators and the most redoubted sea-kings of those days. Their arrival in Britain, and the picturesque myth of Vortigern, Hengist, and Horsa, became a happy hunting-ground with the old chroniclers; and, during the greatest period of English literary history, Thomas Middleton, following Ranulf of Higden's *Polychronicon*, worked it into its final and most apocryphal state in his curious play, *The Mayor of Queenborough*. These rovers were essentially and in every respect savages; but their rugged and energetic nature, which Tacitus had sketched so admirably in his *Germania*, contained the germs of a noble type of national character, and offered a fertile opportunity to Christianity and civilisation. Successive bands of the same race, attracted by the reports of their predecessors, which praised the superiority of the new settlement over their own barren and perhaps over-peopled fatherland, established themselves in those portions of Britain previously occupied by the Romans. But, like the Romans, these new invaders remained excluded from the mountainous districts of Wales and Scotland. Gradually, after a succession of bloody conflicts, they succeeded, as the Roman armies had

done before them, in driving the Celtic marauder back upon his own natural strongholds. To-day we may see the confirmation of this in the fact that the present inhabitants of those mountain regions, who are of pure Celtic blood, retain the language of their British ancestors, and form a race as completely distinct from the English people properly so-called, as the Finn or Lett from the Slavonic occupier of his rightful heritage. At the same time, these mountainous districts became the home of legend: the Saxon and Norman, from their frontier fortresses, saw the misty peaks and hilltops with a superstitious fear. Thus legends grew up round the great summits of the Grampians, like the mysterious mountain Schiehallion: strange peaks like the Monmouthshire "Holy Mountain" were connected with the Devil; and the lofty hills round Dolgelly, with narrow valleys between them, gave rise to the common saying, current until Telford pierced the Snowdonian highlands with his great road, that "the Devil dwelt in the middle of Wales." Conversely, the isolated existence of the Celt among these mountains made him a romantic and impressionable being, who saw visions and dreamed dreams: the Irishman, from time immemorial, revelled in the most exquisite and delicate fancies, in a fairy mythology which, with a certain amount of terror and mystery, combines a wonderful humour, half playful, half tearful, in its tales of Banshees, Fairies, Leprechauns, and wise women. The Welshman, melancholy and deeply religious, produced, in process of time, an unrivalled body of romantic and sacred poetry; while, in the seventeenth century, Ellis Wynn's *Visions of the Sleeping Bard* proved a supreme testimony to the wealth and strangeness of the national imagination. The Highlander, still more sad and less musical, concocted pitiful and heart-rending legends, and became famous for his miraculous power of second-sight. His character may be thoroughly studied in the wild and stormy tales which cluster round the fall of the Stewart dynasty. The level and consequently more easily accessible part of Scotland was peopled by the Anglo-Saxon race, whose manners and customs may be studied there as easily as in England itself. We are highly mistaken in regarding all Scotsmen as Celts alike: Highlander and Lowlander alike would repudiate the insinuation, and William Wallace, a native of the Border, would decline the tartan which posterity has given him. The Romanised Britons or Cymry, occupying the West of England from the Channel to the Clyde, shrank before the invader; some, in the face of persecution, fled to Armorica. The less vigorous moral constitution of the Celt, whether friendly or hostile, was absorbed by the greater energy of the Teuton, or gradually disappeared with the fatal certainty inherent, by an inevitable law, in the contact of two unequal nationalities.

Fate of the Celtic element in Britain.

Celtic legend and superstition.

Division of race in Scotland.

Eventually, after a long struggle, he was confined to Wales and the counties of Devon and Cornwall. The primeval Celt has retained his separate existence on the territory of Great Britain simply on account of a peculiar combination of geographical conditions.

§ 5. The true parentage, therefore, of the English nation is to be traced to the Teutonic race—the race, one of whose tribes had taken part in the fierce wars of the century before Christ, and had menaced the Roman Republic. The northern invaders spoke a Low Germanic dialect, akin to the modern Dutch, but with many Scandinavian forms and words. Its character, like that of the men who used it, was at once practical and imaginative, and required only the influence of civilisation to become a noble vehicle of every kind of expression. In modern English, the ideas which address themselves to the emotions, and those which bring man into relation with the chief objects of nature and the sentiments of simple existence—the ideas, in short, which appeal to the "absolute man" and directly touch the spirit—are expressed for the most part, in simple words of Teutonic origin. The conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity under St. Augustine (597 A.D.) and the devoted band of missionaries who streamed into England in his wake, not only re-established the religion popular from apostolic times among the Romanised Celts and stamped out by the heathen invaders, but brought the heathens themselves into contact with more intellectual forms of life and a higher type of civilisation. The transfer of their religion from the gods of Asgard to our Blessed Saviour, while it softened their manners, exposed their literature to the modifying influences of the corrupt but more civilised Latin literature of the Lower Empire. The language showed rapid signs of improvement. The rude saga and war-song were superseded by compositions on almost every branch of knowledge, legal works, historical chronicles, ecclesiastical and theological disquisitions, together with a large body of poetry, in which a very peculiar metrical system was adapted to subjects derived either from the Scriptures or from the lives of the saints. The curious, but rather tedious, versified paraphrases of the Bible by Cædmon—generally attributed to the middle of the seventh century—were long considered to be the most ancient of the more noteworthy Saxon poems; but, in the present century, the discovery of the manuscript of the lay of *Beowulf* has furnished us with a specimen of Anglo-Saxon poetry decidedly more ancient and far more interesting. Its composition certainly belongs to a period far earlier than English Christianity and its continental influence, and is therefore free from any traces of the imitation of Lower Empire rhetoric which prevents Cædmon's poem from being altogether representative of the national spirit. *Beowulf*, in its picturesque vigour one of the most interesting monuments

Anglo-Saxon language.

Anglo-Saxon literature: BEOWULF.

of early literature, is not inferior in energy and conciseness to the *Nibelungenlied*, although far beneath it in extent of plot and development of character. Its subject is the expedition of Prince Beowulf, a lineal descendant of Odin, with the object of ridding Hrothgar, the Lord and builder of a palace called in the saga Heorot, from a demon or monster, called the Grendel, which secretly enters the hall at night and destroys some of the king's sleeping warriors. This primitive vampire is probably a poetical personification of some poisonous marsh-damp, for, in the poem, it issues from a neighbouring fen—fen, it must be remembered, is a Saxon word, from *fynegean* (to be rotten), and implies a malodorous, rotten place—and takes refuge in it again when Beowulf, after a furious conflict, gives it its death-wound and drives it back. Beowulf's voyage in his "foamy-necked" ship over the "swan-road" of the ocean, his arrival at the foreign court, and his narrative of his own exploits, are, in the telling, very like the ancient Scandinavian sagas. The versification, like that of Saxon poetry in general, is exceedingly peculiar, and the system of its construction for a long time defied the ingenuity of philologists. The Anglo-Saxons did not study the regular recurrence of syllables as the base of their verse—still less that employment of similarly sounding terminations of lines or parts of lines which we call rhyme. Their simple requisite essential of verse was that in any two successive lines —which might be of any length—there should be at least three words beginning with the same letter. This odd and primitive system is called alliteration, and was used, with certain modifications, in later works, such as *The Vision of Piers Plowman.*

Metre.

The language in which these works are composed is popularly called Anglo-Saxon; but in the works themselves it is always styled English, and the country England, or the land of the Angles. By the term Anglo-Saxons we distinguish the Saxons of England from the Saxons of the Continent, without implying any combination of Angles and Saxons, which would be ridiculous. But why the term English was in time applied exclusively to this Saxon language is not very clear. Some writers have supposed that the Saxons were only a section of the Angles, and, consequently, that the Anglian and Saxon colonists always recognised the name Anglian as the proper title of the nation. Another hypothesis is that, as the inhabitants of the island became first known to the Holy See through the Anglian captives who were carried to Rome in the sixth century, the name of this tribe was given by the Romans to the whole people, and that the Christian missionaries to Britain would naturally continue to use it as the name both of the people and of the country. The famous story of St. Gregory and the British captives—*non Angli, sed angeli*—may be cited in support of this. At all events, the story of King Egbert's decree, imposing the name of England upon the

The word English.

country, is unsupported by contemporary or any credible testimony, and it is more natural to suppose that the names England and English had already been adopted as collective terms. It is now very common to discard the term Anglo-Saxon altogether, and employ English as the name of the language from the earliest date to the present day. However, as has been already observed in a previous work of the present series, "a change of nomenclature like this would expose us to the inconvenience, not merely of embracing within one designation objects which have been conventionally separated, but of confounding things logically distinct; for, though our modern English is built upon and mainly derived from the Anglo-Saxon, the two dialects are now so discrepant that the fullest knowledge of one would not alone suffice to render the other intelligible to either the eye or the ear." For all practical purposes they are two separate languages, as different from one another as modern English is from Dutch.

The Anglo-Saxon monarchy.

For a long period the Saxon colonisation of Britain was carried on by detached Teutonic tribes, who established themselves in vacant districts, or ousted less warlike occupants from their homes; and in this way gradually arose a number of independent states and kingdoms. The seven kingdoms into which England was divided were united by a kind of irregular defensive bond, and are known collectively as the Heptarchy; their names remain in the titles of some of our counties—*e.g.* Northumberland, Kent, Sussex. In the regular course of things, the great south-western kingdom of Wessex, comprising Wiltshire, Dorset, Somerset, Berkshire, and Hampshire, growing by degrees more powerful, absorbed the others or rendered them subordinate ornaments of one crown. This important event took place under Egbert, early in the ninth century. From this period to the middle of the eleventh century and the Norman Conquest, the history of the Anglo-Saxon monarchy presents a confused and melancholy picture of bloody incursions and fierce resistance to the barbarous and pagan Danes, who endeavoured to treat the English as the English had treated the Celts. Almost the only brilliant figure in this age is the well-nigh perfect type of patriot, warrior, king, and philosopher, in the person of the illustrious Alfred, whose virtues would appear to posterity almost fabulous were they not handed down in the minute and accurate records of a biographer who knew and served him well. Even Alfred was powerless to stem the tide of Danish invasion: his treaty of Wedmore (878) was broken after a very few years. Meanwhile, the Danish ravages played incalculable havoc with the main sources of learning and literature—the monasteries. In 870, Hinguar and Hubba defeated and slew the East Anglian king Edmund, and burned the episcopal city of Thetford. St. Etheldreda's shrine and monastery at Ely were sacked, the

Danish invasions.

abbey of Crowland was pillaged; at Peterborough, the wealthy "Golden Borough" of the Saxons, the monks were scattered. Churches were burned and their chronicles destroyed. In the great Saxon church of Sidnaceaster, now called Stow—the mother church of the northern part of the diocese of Lincoln—the marks of Danish fire may still be seen upon the piers of the tower. But, although much damage was thus done, the two fierce races, so obstinately contending for the mastery, were very nearly allied in blood, and their amalgamation would have produced no very material change in the language or institutions of the country. In those parts of England, chiefly in the north and east, where colonies of Danes established themselves, either by conquest or settlement, the philologist may trace, in the rustic idiom, and still more clearly in the names of families or places, evident marks of a Scandinavian instead of an Anglo-Saxon population. Examples of this will be found in some portions of the Scottish coast, on the east coast of Ireland, on the coast of Yorkshire—*e.g.* in the names of Runswick Bay and Whitby: in Lincolnshire and the adjacent country—*e.g.* Scawby, Firsby, Skegness, and innumerable other places; and in parts of Norfolk—*e.g.* Hunstanton. The sea-king Havelock, who bequeathed his name to an illustrious family, is said to have founded the Danish town of Grimsby. Saxon memorials, preserved in the names of men, families, and places, and in numerous architectural monuments, are so common that there are very few parts of England in which the majority of the names are not pure Saxon. Our important towns, Bristol, Nottingham, Shrewsbury, preserve their Saxon names beneath a very shallow disguise: a name like Cirencester, the Saxon version of the Roman Corinium, is practically unaltered. The whole middle and lower class of our population bear unmistakable marks of Saxon blood; and, with certain reservations, the sound and spirit of the popular language is essentially Saxon. Such dialects as the Somerset *patois*, or the closely allied speech of Dorset, finely illustrated in the poetry of William Barnes and the novels of Thomas Hardy, form the bridge between the Anglo-Saxon language and the refinement of the later English tongue.

Danish and Saxon place-names.

§ 6. It would be an error, nevertheless, to suppose that all words of Latin origin which are to be found even in the earlier period of the English language were the direct result of the Norman-French element, and were introduced from the year 1066 onwards. Latin was cultivated in the monasteries; it came to be employed in the services of the Church; and, simply as the liturgical language, must have incorporated a large number of Latin words in the Saxon tongue. For example, the word *Mass*, as a synonym for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, was very early derived from the "Ite, *missa* est," of the Liturgy; and round the Church and its services were collected an enormous number of purely

Norman element in English.

Latin words. Alfred, we know, visited Rome in his youth, and, having acquired there a considerable amount of his unquestionable learning, exhibited his care for his countrymen's enlightenment by translating into Saxon the last fruit of Roman literature, the *De Consolatione Philosophiæ* of Boëthius. The chronicles of the Venerable Bede and other Saxon ecclesiastics were composed in Latin; and men like St. Wilfrid and Benedict Biscop, who were devoted to the See of Rome, would have taken pains to impress the usefulness of Latin upon their monks. The conclusion obviously is that there must have been a strong influx of Latin words before the Conquest, the spirit and character of the language remaining unaltered. It may be supposed, too, that during the last half century of Anglo-Saxon rule the superior civilisation of the French race must have had some influence upon the aristocratic, if not upon any other class. The intermarriages between the Saxon and Norman families, and the Norman prejudices of Edward the Confessor, must have tended to increase the Gallicising spirit which is perceptible in Anglo-Saxon writings of that date.

In tracing the influence of the Norman Conquest upon the language, institutions, and national character of the people, we should observe its effects under these separate divisions—political, social, and philological. The first two practically go together. For the most important change which was effected by Norman rule was obviously the organisation in England of the already existing feudal principle, the military tenure of land; the spread of the chivalrous spirit and habits which were the natural result of feudal institutions; and the establishment of the broad line of demarcation separating society into the two great classes of Nobles and Serfs. Feudal institutions at first had been unknown to the early Saxon colonists, and seem to have been repugnant to that free democratic organisation of society imported by them from Germany, which Tacitus shows to have universally prevailed among the primitive inhabitants of the Teutonic swamps and forests. The Scandinavian pirates—the Northmen who carried devastation over every coast accessible to their "sea-horses," and wresting, under the valiant leadership of Hrolf the Ganger, a magnificent province from the feeble and degenerate successors of Charlemagne, called it, after their own name, Normandy—adopted, under pressure of circumstances, a strong system of military organisation. By this alone a warlike minority could hold in subjection a more numerous but less vigorous conquered people. Like the Lombard kings in Italy, and like a multitude of other races in different parts of the world and at different epochs, they found the feudal system indispensable to their position. It already existed in England under a rudimentary form, which they had only to bring into order and endow with a regular constitution. Similarly, the Guiscards, in establishing the Norman kingdoms of Naples and Sicily, im-

Norman influence: (1) *The feudal system.*

printed on them the stamp of feudality, and organised a system whose overpowering influence survived in those conservative provinces until a very late period. However, as William of Normandy's invasion was carried on beneath a really plausible allegation of a legal right to the English throne, his investiture with the crown was very carefully brought into agreement with the constitutional forms of the Saxon monarchy ; and probably it was only the obstinate resistance of the sullen and sturdy Saxon people that at length wearied him into treating his new acquisition with all the vigour of a conquering invader. His careful survey and register of the territory still exists in that curious monument of antiquity, *Domesday Book* ; he introduced the severest measures to keep down the rising of the people, as, for example, the famous institution of Curfew, which, by the way, was not a tyrannical invention of his own, but a very common regulation in feudal states ; he divided the land into 60,000 fiefs, which, after ousting the original Saxon proprietors, he distributed, on the feudal conditions of homage and general defence, to the warriors who had enabled him to subjugate the country ; he depopulated vast tracts of inhabited land and transformed them into forests for the chase ; with very few exceptions he confided the highest offices in Church and State to men of foreign blood. Thus Lanfranc, an Italian of great intellect and statesmanlike qualities, was made Archbishop of Canterbury ; Remigius of Fécamp and Herbert of Lorraine founded the sees of Lincoln and Norwich. These feudal nobles and ecclesiastics built their castles all over the land, great frowning oblong keeps with inaccessible walls many feet thick, surrounded by vast earthworks and entrenchments. Castle Rising in Norfolk, Richmond Castle in Yorkshire, and the huge keep of the Tower of London, are excellent specimens of the warlike structures with which these tyrants overawed the humbler populace. The names of many carried terror: in Devonshire, Judhael of Totnes ; in Oxford, Robert d'Oilgi ; above all, in the fenland, Ivo Taillebois, Lord of Spalding—men like these were detested and feared by the Saxon villains. Two distinct and hostile nationalities came into gradual existence in the country during the long period of Norman and Plantagenet rule. The Saxon race descended to the level of an oppressed and servile class ; but, being far superior in numbers to their oppressors, they ran no risk of being absorbed and lost in the dominant people. Similarly, the high qualities of the Norman race, the most valiant, wise, and intellectually active people in Europe, saved them from sinking their individuality in the country of their adoption. Several ages passed before the two nationalities were amalgamated ; but their amalgamation, the consequence of their high, although very different, merits, and also of a

The Conqueror's institutions.

Norman nobles and prelates.

Saxon and Norman elements in England.

happy combination of circumstances, produced a people of the highest vigour and energy. Their affinities combined, as it were, to form a new and powerful substance. But for several centuries the two fierce and obstinate races felt nothing but hatred towards each other, a hatred cherished by the memory of a thousand acts of tyranny and contempt on the one part, and savage revenge and sullen degradation on the other. The promising overture to their antagonism may be studied in Charles Kingsley's *Hereward the Wake*. Macaulay has well observed that "so strong an association is established in most minds between the greatness of a sovereign and the greatness of the nation which he rules, that almost every historian of England has expatiated with a sentiment of exultation on the power and splendour of her foreign masters, and has lamented the decay of that power and splendour as a calamity to our country. This is, in truth, as absurd as it would be in a Haytian negro of our time to dwell with national pride on the greatness of Lewis the Fourteenth, and to speak of Blenheim and Ramillies with patriotic regret and shame. The Conqueror and his descendants to the fourth generation were not Englishmen: most of them were born in France: they spent the greater part of their lives in France: their ordinary speech was French: almost every high office in their gift was filled by a Frenchman: every acquisition which they made on the Continent estranged them more and more from the population of our island." Though every trace of this double and hostile nationality has long passed away, abundant monuments of its former existence are to be observed in our language. The family names of the higher aristocracy in England are almost universally French, while those of the middle and lower orders are as unmistakably English. Thus among our noblest families are —this has nothing to do with their genealogical complications —the Russells, Seymours, and Courtenays, to mention no other names; while our Smiths, Browns, Johnsons, and Hodgkins plainly betray their Teutonic origin. In many of our villages, especially in the south, the name of the Norman proprietor is retained—*e.g.* Stoke Courcy, Shepton Mallet, Tamerton Foliott, Cheddon Fitzpaine, and hundreds of others. Under the Norman *régime* the Saxon subdivisions of the country were transformed from the democratic shire into the feudal county, administered by a military governor or count, like the *Franche Comté* or county of Burgundy in France, the county of Flanders, the county of Montferrat in Italy, and the very important county of Barcelona in Spain. The Lord-Lieutenant of a county is the peaceful survival of the Norman count. As the shire disappeared in the county, so the ancient Saxon witanagemote or *thing* was transformed into the feudal Parliament of nobles, the members of

Modern survivals of the double nationality.

Shires transformed into counties.

The feudal Parliament.

which occupied their seats, not as elective representatives of the people, but as vassals in the enjoyment of military fiefs. Thus the great ecclesiastical dignitaries, prelates, and mitred abbots took their part in the deliberations of the legislature, in their quality of holders of lands, and disposing, as such, of a certain contingent of military force. One or two prelates were all-powerful. The Bishops of Durham, for instance, had the men of Tynedale and Weardale —St. Cuthbert's "Holy-workfolk"—at their exclusive disposal, and were practically monarchs in their own territory. The Bishop of Ely had palatine jurisdiction in his Isle: offenders, in such cases, broke not the "King's peace" but the "Bishop's peace." A hundred analogies to this may be found in the medieval history of Europe. The king was simply a baron with a high-sounding title in the midst of a republic of temporal and spiritual barons; and this fact explains such events as the Barons' Wars and the extraordinary murders of Edward II and his great-grandson, Richard II.

Military bishops.

But we are at present concerned with the effect of the Norman Conquest upon the English language. Here the task of tracing the process of admixture between the two races becomes at once more complicated and more interesting. On their arrival in Normandy, Hrolf the Ganger's piratical followers had found themselves exposed to those civilising influences which a small minority of rude conquerors, placed in the midst of a subject population, their superior in numbers and culture, can never resist with success. Like the hordes of barbarians who shared among them the territories of the Roman empire—the Spanish Visigoths, for instance—the Northmen, with the Christianity of the conquered nation, imbibed also the language and civilisation so intimately connected with that Christianity. In an incredibly brief space of time they exchanged for their native Scandinavian dialect a language entirely similar, in its words and grammatical forms, to the idiom prevalent in the northern division of France. "Græcia capta ferum victorem cepit, et artes intulit agresti Latio."

Norman influence: (2) Effect on the language.

The language thus communicated by the subject to the conquering nation was a dialect of the great Romance speech of the Middle Ages, which, extending from the northern shore of the Mediterranean to the English Channel, may be defined as the decomposition of the classical Latin. It was soon divided into two great sister-idioms, which adopted as their token their distinctive forms of the word *yes*, and became known as the *Langue d'Oc* and the *Langue d'Oil*. Roughly speaking, a boundary between the two was formed by the Loire. South of the river the dialect split into many forms which still survive in the speech of the common people—Auvergnat, Catalan, etc. These may be all grouped under the head of Provençal, which is closely allied to Spanish

Romance dialects.

and Italian, and is spoken, with local modifications, in Provence, in the county of Languedoc, and in Catalonia. The Auvergnat dialect is somewhat peculiar, with a strong Celtic element, and stands half outside the group. North of the Loire, the Burgundian of Sens, the "franc Champenois," the inhabitant of the king's domain, and the Tourangeau of the middle provinces, all spoke a language which, to all intents and purposes, is the French of to-day. Knowing the circumstances under which such a dialect as the Romance was formed, it is no difficult problem to establish *à priori* the changes undergone by the mother tongue, or Latin, in its transformation into what was at first little better than a barbarous jargon, although developed subsequently into regular and beautiful dialects. The language of ancient Rome, a highly inflected and complicated tongue, naturally lost nearly all its inflections and complexity. Thus the Latin substantive and adjective lost all those terminations which in the original language expressed relation, like the various cases of the different declensions; and these were indicated from that time forward by the simpler expedient of prepositions. This is the transition from a synthetic to an analytic language. Latin still existed as the monastic and learned language. Brought face to face with the Romance dialects, it lost its classic stateliness, but gained in humanity and nervous power of expression. Medieval Latin, with all its occasional solecisms and barbarisms, was not a dead, but a very living language, the vehicle of the highest emotions. In their influence upon the human heart, their knowledge of man, and their power of saying precisely what they wanted without circumlocution, St. Bernard of Clairvaux and the author of the *Imitatio Christi* were greater by far than Cicero and Seneca.

Medieval Latin.

§ 7. The literary models which the Norman invasion introduced into England were no less important than the linguistic changes consequent upon the admixture of the Romance dialect with the Saxon speech. Together with their feudal institutions the Normans brought with them the poetry of feudalism, that is, the poetry of chivalry. *Lais* and *Romances*, *Fabliaux* and chivalrous legends, soon began to modify the rude poetical sagas and the tedious Lives of saints and hermits which had formed the bulk of Saxon literature in England. Few subjects are so dear to the learned amateur as the origin and specific character of the Romance literature. In particular, the distinction between the compositions of the Norman *Trouvères* and the Provençal *Troubadours* has given rise to many elaborate dissertations and contending theories. Nevertheless, it may be easily concluded that *Trouvère* and *Troubadour* are obviously two forms of the same word, the first belonging to the *Langue d'Oil*, the second to the *Langue d'Oc*. The natural and picturesque

Romance dialects and English literature.

Trouvères and Troubadours.

definition of a poet as a "finder" or "inventor," which these words convey, bears some analogy with the Scandinavian term *Skald*, or "polisher" of language, with the Greek ποιητής, and with the Anglo-Saxon name of the *Scôp* or "shaper"; and the beautiful qualification of the poetic art as the "gay science" (*el gay saber*, *la gaie science*) no less faithfully corresponds to the idea expressed in the word "gleeman," which was applied in Saxon to the singer or bard, the gleemaker of the banquet. Now we find, looking at the distinction between Northern and Southern peoples, that in the Northman imagination, sentiment, and memory receive most development, while the Southerner is more remarkable for the vivacity of his passions and the intensity—which also implies the transitory duration—of his emotional feeling. Naturally, then, among a Northern nation an imaginative or poetical literature will have a natural tendency to take a narrative form, while a Southern people will express itself more naturally in the spasmodic form of lyrics. And, comparing the Trouvères' literary type with that of the Troubadours, this is what we actually find. It is evident, further, that the composition of long narrative recitals dealing with real or imaginary events would, at this period, require a certain degree of literary culture, united with a considerable amount of leisure. Many, therefore, of the interminable romances of the Trouvères were the work of ecclesiastics, chiefly monks; while, on the other hand, the bulk of the Troubadour literature, consisting of shorter and more lively lyric and satiric pieces, was in a large measure due to princes, knights, and ladies. Verse-making was, in those days, a virtue necessary in the accomplished gentleman, as, for instance, Chaucer tells us of his squire—

"He coude songes make and wel endyte."

Chivalric romance.

The source from which the Romance poets, both of the Northern and Southern dialects, drew the materials for their chivalric fiction is debatable ground. The various theories broached in connection with this curious subject may be reduced to three hypotheses: the first referring them to an Oriental, the second to a Celtic, and the third to a Teutonic source. The Teutonic hypothesis assumes either a generally German, or an exclusively Scandinavian nationality. In spite of the ingenious defence of each of these theories, conducted with remarkable power and learning, they are all open to the reproach of being too exclusive. Chivalric romance existed, with well-marked general features, long before the European nations acquired, through the Crusades, any acquaintance with the imagery and scenery of the East; so that the first hypothesis becomes altogether untenable. Secondly, considering the barbarism into which the Celtic tribes were generally fallen at the time when the chivalric literature began to prevail, and the very small knowledge of

Gaulish language and historic legend possessed by the Romance populations of Europe, the Celtic theory is not free from suspicion. It is true that the Trouvères almost invariably pretend to have discovered the subjects of their narratives in the traditions or among the chronicles of the "olde gentil Bretons," just as Marie of France refers her readers to the Celtic or Armorican authorities. However, this literary artifice has been practised in all ages—witness in our own day such books as Mr. Andrew Lang's *Monk of Fife*—and the parade of fictitious authorities has been the diversion of many men of letters. The Celtic origin of these fictions is certainly probable from the importance given in them to Arthur and his knights; for, if such a person as Arthur ever existed, he must have been a British prince. But the Middle Ages played strange tricks with dead men's memories, and the appearance of Alexander, Hector, and Hercules as the *preux chevaliers* of medieval legends does not confirm, but rather contradicts any intimate acquaintance on their author's part with the Homeric and classical poems. If tried by this standard, the Arthurian cycle does not show any necessarily Celtic origin; for, in the traditional poems of the ancient Britons, Arthur was a comparatively insignificant figure, and was by no means the centre of a feudal society, seeing that such a state of things had no existence in these lays. The conclusion is that the Troubadour or Trouvère simply borrowed striking names from dead literatures, and used them in his own way, without any necessary acquaintance with their real character or the spirit of the books from which he had taken them. At the same time, the theory which supposes the Britons, in their flight from the Saxon invasion, to have carried the Arthurian traditions to Armorica and to have given them back to England in the compositions of the Trouvères, is undeniably fascinating, and a great deal more probable than any theory of Arab influence from Spain or the East.

Origin of the Arthurian cycle.

§ 8. For two centuries after the Norman Conquest the Anglo-Saxon and Norman-French continued to be spoken in the island, as two distinct languages having little intermixture with one another. The most important change, which converted the Anglo-Saxon into Old English and consists chiefly in the substitution of the vowel *e* for the different inflections, was not due in any considerable degree to the Norman Conquest, although it was probably hastened by that event. It had begun even before, and was produced by the same causes which led to similar changes in the kindred German dialects. The large introduction of French words into English dates from the time when the Normans began to speak the language of the conquered race. It is, however, an error to represent the English language as springing from a mixture of Anglo-Saxon and French, since a mixed language, in the strict sense of the term, may be

Transition from Anglo-Saxon to English.

pronounced an impossibility. Although receiving accessions of French words so large that its character was materially changed, the English still remained an essentially Teutonic tongue. The change itself has no fixed date; it was a gradual process, and must have advanced with more or less rapidity in different parts of the country. Its progress depended on geographical conditions. In remote or upland districts, where it hardly penetrated, the inhabitants still exhibit in their *patois* an evident preponderance of the Saxon element, using many old Teutonic words now obsolete in our own language, and retaining Teutonic peculiarities of accent and pronunciation. "Nothing can be more difficult," says Hallam, "than to determine, except by an arbitrary line, the commencement of the English language; not so much, as in those of the Continent, because we are in want of materials, but rather from an opposite reason, the possibility of tracing a very gradual succession of verbal changes that ended in a change of denomination. . . . For when we compare the earliest English of the thirteenth century with the Anglo-Saxon of the twelfth, it seems hard to pronounce why it should pass for a separate language, rather than a modification or simplification of the former. We must conform, however, to usage, and say that the Anglo-Saxon was converted into English: 1, by contracting or otherwise modifying the pronunciation and orthography of words; 2, by omitting many inflections, especially of the noun, and consequently making more use of articles and auxiliaries; 3, by the introduction of French derivatives; 4, by using less inversion and ellipsis, especially in poetry. Of these the second alone, I think, can be considered as sufficient to describe a new form of language; and this was brought about so gradually that we are not relieved from much of our difficulty whether some compositions shall pass for the latest offspring of the mother or the earliest proofs of the daughter's fertility."

Example from "Ivanhoe" of the lingual transition,

The picturesque element so happily employed by Scott in the opening chapter of *Ivanhoe*, often has been quoted as a good popular exemplification of the mode in which the Saxon and French elements were blended. The common animals which serve as food to man retained, under the charge of Saxon serfs and bondmen, their Teutonic name, but, served up at the table of the Norman oppressor, they received a French designation. As instances of this Scott cites the parallel terms *ox* and *beef*, *swine* and *pork*, *sheep* and *mutton*, *calf* and *veal*. It is curious to see, on examining the early English grammar and language of our old poets and chroniclers, how often the primitive Saxon forms gradually became effaced before the French orthography and pronunciation of the newly-introduced words had been harmonised with the general character of the new idiom. Take, for example, the following lines of Chaucer:—

and from Chaucer.

"The sleere of him-self yet saugh I ther,
His herte-blood hath bathed al his heer;
The nayl y-driven in the shode a-night;
The colde deeth, with mouth gaping up-right.
Amiddes of the temple sat meschaunce,
With disconfort and sory contenaunce."

In these verses we see the Saxon grammatical forms combined with a large importation of Norman-French words which have not yet lost their original accentuation. We find the Teuton forms moving into and overlapping the newly introduced Gallicisms. Such was the state in which Chaucer found the national idiom at the beginning of the fourteenth century: at its end, his genius may be said to have put the last touch to the consolidation of the English language. Nevertheless, for a considerable period after his time such writings as were addressed to the sympathies of the lower classes continued to retain much of the Saxon character in their orthography, grammatical structure, and versification. The alliterative system of verse left its mark on English literature for a period long subsequent to the reign of Richard II; while, on the other hand, the elaborate compositions addressed to the still purely Norman aristocracy keep much of the French spirit in their diction and imagery.

§ 9. Although we can assign no exact date to the transition from Anglo-Saxon to English, the chief alterations may be approximately assigned to the following epochs :—

Classification of language into epochs.

I. *Anglo-Saxon*, from A.D. 450 to 1150.

II. *Semi-Saxon*, from A.D. 1150 to 1250 (*i.e.* from the reign of Stephen to the middle of the reign of Henry III), so called because it partakes strongly of the characteristics of both Anglo-Saxon and of the subsequent Old English.

III. *Old English*, from A.D. 1250 to 1350 (*i.e.* from the middle of the reign of Henry III to the middle of the reign of Edward III).

IV. *Middle English*, from A.D. 1350 to about 1550 (*i.e.* from the middle of the reign of Edward III to the reign of Edward VI).

V. *Modern English*, from A.D. 1550 to the present day.

The first three periods scarcely belong to a history of English literature, and only a brief account of them is given in the Notes and Illustrations appended to the present chapter. Some writers, disliking the term *Anglo-Saxon*, have wished to call the Anglo-Saxon *First English*, the Semi-Saxon *Second English*, and the remainder of our language (*i.e.* from A.D. 1250 to the present day) *Third English*. It is purely with this Third English that we are concerned, and its real literary history begins only in the reign of Edward III, under the creative and brilliant genius of Geoffrey Chaucer.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

A.—ANGLO-SAXON LITERATURE.

A.D. 450–1150.

The earliest literature of the Anglo-Saxons bears the impress of the religious culture under which it was formed. Unlike their brethren, who sang their old heroic lays in the primeval forests, the conquerors of the rich provinces of Britain had descended from action to contemplation, and their literature was artificial. There was but little difference of time in the development of poetry and prose, and the works produced were with very few exceptions the elaborate compositions of educated men, rather than the spontaneous products of genius inspired by a people's ancient legends. The chief subjects were moral, religious, historical, and didactic. Under the tutelage of the Church the most lasting monuments of Anglo-Saxon prose literature were written in Latin, while the vernacular tongue was chiefly employed in translating the learned works of such men as Bede and Alcuin. The value of the vernacular literature is confined to the early poems: the later work lacks form, and is interesting only on account of its matter.

I. The VERNACULAR POETRY scarcely retains a trace of that wild epic fire which is seen in the Scandinavian Sagas. 1. We have at least three important specimens of old national songs, written in the spirit of the continental Germans, and probably composed, in part at least, before their migration to England. The authors are heathens; they are the bards or *Scôps* (*i.e.* shapers) who were attached to the households of pagan chieftains and were treated with singular honour. The origin of these poems is probably to be found in the detached lays sung by these noble minstrels, which were afterwards welded together into a compact form. The chief of them is the lay of *Beowulf*, which has been described in the text. It seems to have originated at the primitive seat of the Angles in Schleswig, and to have been brought over to England about the end of the fifth century. The other two are *Widsith, or the Traveller's Song*, which, in the beginning, was due to some wandering bard, and appears from internal evidence to belong to the end of the fourth or the beginning of the fifth century; and *The Battle of Finnsburg*, a fragment describing the massacre of Hraef the Dane by Finn, King of the North Frisians. The manuscripts of all these works belong to a much later period, principally to the eleventh century, and therefore have suffered a good deal from interpolations. It is only in the tenth century that we again meet with compositions of this class, in the patriotic poem on Athelstan's victory at the battle of Brunanburh (A.D. 937), in the collection of songs on Edgar the Peaceable (959–975), and on the death of Edward the Martyr (979), and in *The Battle of Maldon* (991).

2. Of religious poetry, the chief specimen is the so-called *Metrical Paraphrase of the Scriptures*, which, in its original form, was the work of ST. CÆDMON (fl. 660–680), a monk of St. Hilda's monastery at Streoneshalh (Whitby). In ascribing the beginning of these poems—which were continued by Cædmon's followers all through the eighth century—to Cædmon himself, we rely on the sole authority of Bede; and some modern critics have assigned the whole of the collection of scriptural paraphrases to a later period. The treatment of the stories shows how the old heroic notions of pagan society mingled themselves with the new Christianity, and thus would alone point to the early date of part of the poem. Whatever be the date, it is a striking piece of work, and appears to have supplied Milton

with some hints. This is particularly true of the part of the poem, probably Cædmon's own, known as the *Genesis A* to distinguish it from *Genesis B*, a later version and amplification belonging to the ninth century.

But more interesting even than Cædmon is the mysterious CYNEWULF, of whom nothing is known save that he lived between 750 and 790 and was very probably a Northumbrian. It seems almost certain that the Anglo-Saxon *Riddles* preserved in that museum of Early English literature, the Exeter Book, are, at least in part, the work of Cynewulf. If so, they belong to his early youth, when he was wandering about and singing in noble houses, and his later religious poems follow his conversion. Four poems are known to be his, since he has introduced his name into the text in an acrostic of Runic characters. Mr. Stopford Brooke, judging from the spiritual indications of these fervently religious hymns, places them in this order: (1) the *Juliana*, which contains the acts of St. Juliana, virgin and martyr; (2) the *Christ*, a splendid poem in three parts—the Nativity, the Ascension, and the Last Day. Both these poems are in the Exeter Book. The next two are in the book of Anglo-Saxon homilies and poems preserved at Vercelli. These are: (3) *The Fates of the Apostles*, whose title tells its own tale, and (4) the *Elene*, which is founded upon the legend of the Invention of the Cross by the Empress Helena. Of the other poems attributed to Cynewulf, the Exeter Book contains *The Phœnix*, which applies the familiar tale of the phœnix, as told in Latin by Lactantius, to the Resurrection, and the *St. Guthlac*; while, in the Vercelli Book, we find the *Andreas*, or Acts of St. Andrew, and *The Dream of the Rood*. The authorship of these last has perplexed critics, but they follow the manner of Cynewulf very closely. Certain continuations of Cædmon's paraphrases probably belong to Cynewulf or to some poet under his influence.

The Exeter Book, which we have already mentioned as containing so much of Cynewulf's poetry, contains a number of other poems of all the early periods. For example, the pagan *Widsith* and a contemporary lay, *Deor, or the Singer's Complaint*, come from it. It was bequeathed to the cathedral with a number of other books, by Leofric, Bishop from 1046 to 1072, who removed the seat of his see from Crediton to Exeter. The Vercelli Book is an eleventh century manuscript, discovered in the Chapter Library at Vercelli in 1822.

II. (*a*) The LATIN LITERATURE of the Anglo-Saxon period demands notice before the vernacular prose literature, since it formed the groundwork upon which the vernacular writers founded their attempts. It was the product of foreign ecclesiastical influence. The earliest missionaries were imbued with the learning of the Western Church, and great schools were founded, first in Kent, then in Wessex, and afterwards in Northumbria. In 668 THEODORE OF TARSUS became Archbishop of Canterbury, and, with his friend the deacon HADRIAN, taught both Greek and Latin literature. The School of Canterbury, the earliest of the great medieval schools of Latin, was founded in 671, and was encouraged by subsequent archbishops. One can gain some impression of the eagerness with which Latin studies were pursued from the fact that Alcuin, the great master of the York School, complained to Charlemagne, at the end of the eighth century, of the literary poverty of France as compared with England. He also gives an account of the great library at York, from which and from other lists we can see what writers formed the taste of the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries. There was a decided preference for the Greek authors above the Latin. The classical poets were read, but with a pious suspicion, and the works which received most attention were those of the Fathers and the Christian poets, whose faults we find closely imitated in the poetry of the Anglo-Saxon churchmen. This ecclesiastical taste was strengthened and literary treasures

increased by the habit of visiting Rome, which became frequent in the eighth century. Many women were celebrated for their learning.

(*b*) The Canterbury School lost its vigour as the metropolitan see grew in importance, and its energies were, for the most part, transferred to Wessex. This was principally due to ST. ALDHELM (*circ.* 640–709), a pupil of Theodore and Hadrian, and a West Saxon himself. The Irishman Mailduf had already founded a monastic school at Malmesbury, which still bears his name in a corrupted form. Aldhelm had been one of Mailduf's early pupils, and brought back to his old seminary the Latin learning and monastic organisation of Canterbury. He became Abbot of Malmesbury, and the obscure little town on the confines of Wessex and Mercia became the centre of a new intellectual life which extended itself through the length and breadth of Wessex. From 705 to 709, as Bishop of Sherborne, Aldhelm travelled unceasingly through his large diocese, making use of his numerous accomplishments in spreading the life of the Church and the new learning, and continuing to found monastic schools in Wiltshire and Somerset. His missionary energy and his scholarship are, perhaps, more remarkable than his actual writings. His poetry is turgid and full of extravagant conceits. He wrote a poem in hexameters, *De laudibus Virginum*, which was a versified adaptation of a prose treatise he had previously written on the same theme, a book of *Ænigmata*, which was certainly studied by Cynewulf before writing his Anglo-Saxon *Riddles*, and a poem, *De octo principibus Vitiis*. These, with a few other poems and letters, form his extant works. But he also wrote in the vernacular, and is said to have translated the Book of Psalms into Anglo-Saxon verse. As he went on his missionary expeditions he would sing his Anglo-Saxon hymns in the chief towns, and so attract people to his preaching; and these poems were preserved orally, not only by the minstrels, but as exercises of memory by the monks.

The schools of Wessex — great monastic houses like Glastonbury and Sherborne—produced no very great writers; their activity lay chiefly on the side of ecclesiastical organisation, and their literature, after St. Aldhelm's time, is confined, speaking generally, to the correspondence of those great missionaries who, to the glory of Wessex, became the evangelists of the Teutonic tribes. The chief of these, ST. BONIFACE, or, to give him his English name, WINIFRID (680–755) of Crediton in Devonshire, has left a collection of valuable letters to friends in England, amounting (with those addressed to him) to one hundred and six. As is well known, he was the apostle of the Frisians and the first Archbishop of Mayence. The Danish invasion of Wessex in 871, although successfully repelled by Ethelred I and Alfred, was fatal to the schools for the time being. Under Alfred, Winchester became the chief centre of learning, and the practice of writing in Latin revived. ASSER, Bishop of Sherborne (d. 910), who wrote the doubtfully authentic life of Alfred, was an importation from St. Davids. The great revival of monastic life and learning in England must be attributed to the renowned ST. DUNSTAN (924-988), a native of Glastonbury, who studied there under Irish teachers and became Abbot of the monastery. Enjoying the favour of Edgar the Peaceable, he passed through the sees of Worcester and London to the throne of Canterbury. He wrote commentaries in Latin on the Benedictine rule, but his thoroughly patriotic spirit led him to encourage the study of English in his monasteries; and in this he was followed by the great ST. ETHELWOLD, Bishop of Winchester. It was a Saxon monk of Winchester, WULFSTAN, who, at the opening of Edward the Confessor's reign, translated Lanferht's *Miracula sancti Swithuni* into Latin verse.

(*c*) The great centre, however, of Latin writing was in Northumbria, the debatable ground of Celtic and Roman Christianity. The place of honour belongs almost equally to

two men. The first of these, ST. WILFRID (634–709), the staunch supporter of the Roman rite, Archbishop of York and apostle of Sussex, passed his stormy life in the endeavour to unite the churches of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. His own writings are lost, but he did for Northumbria what St. Aldhelm did for Wessex. The monasteries of Ripon and Hexham recognised him as their founder. But Wilfrid was essentially a controversialist, his methods were not always of the wisest, and the impression which he effected was, for the most part, temporary. The solid work of the time, the root of the pedigree of Latin learning in Northumbria, is due to BENEDICT BISCOP (d. 690), the founder of religious houses at Monkwearmouth and Jarrow, who brought back from his indefatigable roamings on the Continent numberless treasures of literature and art.

The immediate result of Benedict's energy is seen in his pupil the VENERABLE BEDE or BÆDA (673–735), who was a native of Wearmouth, and was placed under Benedict's teaching at the age of seven, six years after the foundation of the monastery. He became a deacon at nineteen, a priest at thirty, and passed his entire life in the house at Jarrow, which had been founded in 682 and formed one monastery together with Wearmouth. We know of one external visit which he paid to Archbishop Egbert at York, but otherwise he seems to have kept within the walls of his monastery. His dying moments were divided between religious exercises and the dictation of the last sentences of a work which he just lived to finish. His works embrace the whole compass of the learning of the age. Numbering more than forty, they may be divided into four classes: *Theological*, consisting chiefly of allegorical commentaries on the Scriptures, which were completed after 709; *Scientific Treatises*, exhibiting the imperfect knowledge of science from Pliny to his own time; *Grammatical* works, which display much learning, with some correct but lifeless Latin poems; and *Historical* compositions, which place him in the first rank among medieval writers. These include an early work, *De sex ætatibus seculi*, written for St. Wilfrid's approbation, and a *Life of St. Cuthbert* and of the abbots of his own monastery—Benedict and the learned Ceolfrid; but his greatest work is the *Ecclesiastical History of the Anglo-Saxons* from their first settlement in England, which was afterwards translated into English by King Alfred. He used the aid of the most learned men of his time in collecting the documents and traditions of the various kingdoms, and there were few great prelates or monks with whom, in collecting these details, he did not correspond.

Bede was surrounded by a number of literary friends. He knew St. Wilfrid; he received Holy Orders at the hands of St. John of Beverley, to whom northern learning was much indebted; and he was the intimate friend of a third Bishop of Hexham, the erudite Acca, to whom he dedicated some of his works. His work, however, was carried on by his pupil EGBERT, Archbishop of York (*circ.* 678–766), brother of Edbert, King of Northumbria, and founder of the greatest of all the English schools of learning, the School of York. Egbert reformed his distracted diocese, and made York Minster the wonder of the North, placing in it a splendid library and raising round it a school which may be called the first English University. His own writings were chiefly on points of discipline, and two of them, the *Confessionale* and *Pœnitentiale*, were written in Anglo-Saxon as well as in Latin. His work was carried on and brought to perfection by his kinsman and successor ALBERT or ETHELBERT, archbishop from 776 to 782. Albert entrusted the care of the Cathedral School to a young native of York and pupil of the seminary, who had just been ordained deacon. This was the great ALCUIN (735–804), the most illustrious of our early Latin scholars. Under him the school rose to its greatest fame; but, when he left, its reputation sank, and, during the troubles of the early part of the ninth century, it died out

altogether. Eanbald, a pupil of Alcuin, succeeded Albert in 782 and sent Alcuin on a mission to Rome. On his way back Alcuin met Charlemagne, and was persuaded to remain at his Court till 790, when he revisited England on a mission to Offa of Mercia. He returned to Charlemagne's Court, and resided there and at Tours till his death, holding a series of magnificent appointments. His works were commentaries, dogmatic and practical treatises, lives of saints, several very interesting letters, and a number of Latin poems, chiefly historical. Among these are an elegy on the destruction of Lindisfarne by the Danes, which took place in 793, when he had settled permanently on the Continent, and a poem on the *Bishops and Saints of the Church of York*, containing much useful information about the school. What England lost in Alcuin, the Continent gained; but the fact that the School of York was weakened, not so much by internal decay, as by a kind of gradual transplantation to France, is little to his credit as an Englishman. Patriotism was, however, not so much of a virtue in those days of petty kingdoms as it became later on.

(*d*) It must not be forgotten that these writers of Latin prose had certain predecessors, who were not Saxons, but belonged to the old Celtic race. The great Christian activity of Ireland made it a centre of learning while England was still a pagan country, and the efforts of Irish missionaries, and notably of the great St. Columba, reached the West Coast of Scotland at an early date, and afterwards spread to the North of England. GILDAS, a noble Celt, lived from about 493 to 570, and, like so many of the British Celts after the Saxon invasion, fled to Armorica and founded the monastery of St. Gildas de Ruis, of which, five centuries later, Abelard became abbot. He wrote a Latin letter to his fellow-countrymen, declaiming against the vices of the day, and a *History of Britain*. A similar history, of doubtful authenticity, was written in the ninth century by NENNIUS. ST. COLUMBANUS (*circ.* 543–615) was an Irish Celt from the monastery at Bangor, on Belfast Lough, who set out thence at the head of a mission to the eastern parts of Gaul, Switzerland, and the south-west of Germany. He was the founder of the monasteries of Luxeuil in the Vosges, and Bobbio in Lombardy. He wrote in Latin several theological treatises, six poems, and some letters. Another writer of the same period was ST. ADAMNANUS, Abbot of Iona, who wrote the *Life of St. Columba*. Nearly two centuries later Ireland sent forth JOHANNES SCOTUS (d. 877), surnamed from his native land ERIGENA, who settled in France and became, by his dialectic skill and his acquaintance with ancient philosophy, one of the founders of the philosophical sect of Realists. The story of his coming to England on Alfred's invitation is more than doubtful. The work of these writers cannot be said to have much to do with English literature; but by Gildas and Nennius in Brittany were propagated the popular myths which in time were collected into the legend of King Arthur.

III. The VERNACULAR ANGLO-SAXON PROSE LITERATURE contains few but great names. Above all shines that of KING ALFRED (849–901), the story of whose early training and life-long self-discipline needs not to be recounted here. His early love for the old national poetry, the growing neglect of Latin even by the priests, and the eager desire, of which he himself tells us, that the people might enjoy the treasures of learning collected in the churches for security from the invaders, urged him to the culture of the native tongue for popular instruction. While inviting over learned men to repair the decay of scholarship, the king himself set the example of translating existing works into the vernacular. Having learned Latin only late in life, he did not disdain the help of scholars like Asser in clearing up grammatical difficulties, while he brought to the work untiring industry, great capacity of comprehending the author's general meaning, and sound judgment upon

points needing illustration. His most important translations were those of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, the *Ancient History* of Orosius, Boëthius' *De Consolatione Philosophiæ*, and, for the use of the clergy, the *Pastorale* of St. Gregory. According to William of Malmesbury, Alfred had begun an Anglo-Saxon version of the Psalms shortly before his death. Among other works which have been attributed to him without much authenticity, are *Alfred's Proverbs*, a translation of *Æsop's Fables*, and a metrical version of the *Metres* of Boëthius. Many works were translated by his order or after his example—for instance, the *Dialogues of Gregory*, by Werfrith, Bishop of Worcester; but few of these remain. The new intellectual impulse, given by Alfred's policy of calling foreign scholars into the realm, was followed by other kings down to the eve of the Conquest, and sustained the activity of Anglo-Saxon literature for some time.

The English prose, inaugurated by Alfred, was brought a step further by ALFRIC (*circ.* 955–1025), a monk of Winchester and pupil of Ethelwold. He became Abbot of Eynsham about 1005, and died there, but most of his work in English was produced at Winchester. While in charge of the monastery at Cerne Abbas, from 987 to 989, he seems to have practised himself in writing, and his eighty *Homilies* were published before 994. His chief work was the translation of the Pentateuch and of other books of the Old Testament, including *Judith*, which had also been treated in verse by the continuators of Cædmon. He wrote numerous other theological treatises both in English and Latin. As a grammarian and as a teacher at Winchester, he laboured to revive the neglected study of Latin by his *Latin Grammar* (from Donatus and Priscian), his *Glossary*, and his *Colloquium* (a conversation book). This last was republished by his namesake and pupil ALFRIC BATA, (fl. 1005). To catalogue Alfric's numerous English and Latin works would be a long task. After he went to Eynsham he wrote chiefly in Latin, and his most important work during his later life was the life of his master, the great Ethelwold. He must not be confounded with Alfric, Archbishop of Canterbury, who died in 1006, with Alfric Puttoc, Archbishop of York, who died in 1051, or with Alfric, Bishop of Crediton, who died in 994. Alfric was the second creator of English prose; modelling himself at first on Alfred, he developed a manner of his own which became the chief force in English style during the eleventh century. The principal writer of the eleventh century, other than Alfric, was WULFSTAN (d. 1023), Bishop of Worcester and Archbishop of York, who wrote some homilies and a passionate *Appeal to the Angles*, blaming their vices and irreligion for the disasters they were suffering at the hands of the Danes.

It remains to notice two great monuments of Anglo-Saxon prose literature, the *Chronicle* and the *Laws*. The *Saxon Chronicle* is a record of the history of the people, compiled at first, according to one statement, by Plegmund, Archbishop of Canterbury. Down to 891, it is written by one hand—some conjecture that of Alfred himself, who had certainly encouraged its compilation. Thence it was continued, as a contemporary record, in various styles, to the middle of the twelfth century, and breaks off abruptly, after a career of increasing dulness, in the first year of Henry II (1154). The three main portions are known as the *Winchester Annals*, which go down to 1070 and then begin to be written in Latin, the *Worcester Annals*, which go down to 1079, and the *Peterborough Annals*, which collated previous editions and completed the work. As a whole, the *Chronicle* is dry and lifeless, full of gaps, and displays towards the end a singular want of historical talent or selection.

The fragments of the *Anglo-Saxon Laws* go back as early as the reign of Ethelbert, King of Kent, but the laws of this date are reduced to the language of a later age. Alfred, who began the work, collating the three separate

codes of Kent, Wessex, and Mercia, says that, with the advice of his Witan, he rejected what did not please him, but added little of his own. The work was then submitted to, and adopted by, the Witan. His chief followers in these labours were Athelstan, Ethelred the Unready, and Canute. The previous code of Wessex had been that of Ina, who probably had been assisted by St. Aldhelm; the author of the code of Kent had been Ethelbert; while Offa had performed the same service for Mercia.

B.—ANGLO-NORMAN LITERATURE.

A.D. 1066–1350.

The influence of the Norman Conquest upon the country was at once destructive and reconstructive. The ordinance which forbade the Saxon clergy to aspire to any ecclesiastical dignity confined the remnants of literary activity to the monasteries, except in the case of those who were willing to adapt themselves to the new state of things. By the middle of the twelfth century the Anglo-Saxon learning gradually died out, its chief work being the completion of the *Saxon Chronicle* in the monastery of Peterborough. The chief works of learning were composed in Latin, while for lighter compositions the English adopted the language of their conquerors. On the other hand, the Normans introduced a new and most potent element of intellectual activity. The fifty years preceding the Conquest had witnessed a great revival of learning on the Continent, and this was stimulated by that intercourse between Europeans and Arabs which continued all through the era of the Crusades. The Arabs, imbued with the Greek learning of the conquered East, transmitted it to Europe, and thus this revival of letters, culminating in what has been called the twelfth century Renaissance, owed its source, like the brighter revival in the fifteenth century, to the ancient Greeks. There was, however, this difference, that while, in the later Renaissance, inspiration was drawn from the great poets and orators, the Arabs of this date were chiefly attracted by the physical, logical, and metaphysical works of Aristotle and his school. The Aristotelian logic and spirit of systematising were eagerly applied to theology, especially in France. The monasteries of Caen and Bec in Normandy became distinguished seats of the new science; and in them were trained Lanfranc and St. Anselm, the first great lights of Anglo-Norman learning. Indeed St. Anselm is often regarded as the founder of the scholastic philosophy, which was the fruit of the new movement. But, although his position in its history is critical, he is only a connecting link. The old method of treating theology followed by the Fathers rested on the foundation of faith in the dogmatic statements of Scripture. The scholastic philosophy aspired to establish a complete system of truth by a chain of irrefragable reasoning. St. Anselm used the method of stating and combating objections only with a view to the establishment of separate doctrines. But PETER ABELARD (1079–1150), breaking away from St. Anselm's premises, used the same methods with a bold originality. He was opposed by ST. BERNARD (1091–1153), Abbot of Clairvaux, who took his stand on the old patristic ground. However, the real founder of Scholasticism, the first of the Schoolmen, was not the pupil of St. Bernard, the last of the Fathers, but of Abelard. This was PETER THE LOMBARD, who published in 1151 his *Four Books of the Sentences*, and is known on that account as the "Master of the Sentences." "Scholasticism," it has been said, "made a false start in the school of Bec; its true commencement dates a little later, and from Paris." Peter the Lombard became, in process of time, Bishop of Paris; and the University of Paris, growing in numbers and importance until it far outstripped its original limits as a Cathedral School, became the focus of European theology. In England there is no trace

of the new learning before the Conquest, although she helped to prepare its way by sending forth such men as Erigena and Alcuin. Erigena, indeed, as early as the ninth century, had employed philosophical methods in religious discussion. But he was a neo-Platonist: the Schoolmen were Aristotelians. The new learning not only entered in the train of the Conqueror, but was fostered by his personal influence. William, and nearly all his successors down to Henry III, were themselves well educated, and patronised literature and art. It seems to have been the illiteracy of the Saxon bishops and abbots, and not merely political motives, that caused their deposition; their places were filled by the most learned of the Norman ecclesiastics. Lanfranc and St. Anselm themselves occupied the see of Canterbury. HERMAN, Bishop of Salisbury, founded a great library; GODFREY, prior of St. Swithun's at Winchester, wrote Latin epigrams in the style of Martial; and GEOFFREY, an eminent scholar from the University of Paris, founded a school at Dunstable, and acted, with his scholars, a drama of his own on the Life of St. Katharine. Numerous as were the Saxon monasteries, no less than 557 new religious houses were founded between the Conquest and the reign of John. All of these, as well as the great secular cathedrals like Lincoln, had schools for those who were destined to the Church, while general schools were founded in the towns and villages. The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge sprang into existence, by a series of political and social circumstances, in the course of the twelfth century. The origin of Oxford seems to have been the quarrel between Henry II and the University of Paris on account of the support given by the Parisian doctors to Becket. Henry issued a statute prohibiting Englishmen from studying at Paris, and, as the first mention of Oxford as a University occurs soon after this, the theory seems more than merely probable. Similarly, Cambridge is supposed to have originated in a quarrel between John and the Oxford students, which caused a migration. The importance of Oxford during the Middle Ages was much greater than that of Cambridge; but it is obvious that, when the prohibition on Parisian study was removed, the prestige of the English University remained inferior to that of Paris. Oxford, in fact, during the first century of its existence, was regarded as a portal to the great continental Universities of Paris and Bologna. English students resorted to these in large numbers, and formed at Paris one of the "four nations." Classical learning revived in the Universities, and was extended in the thirteenth century from the Latin poets to Greek and even Hebrew. This was in a great measure due to the influence of the great Schoolman, ROBERT GROSSETESTE, Bishop of Lincoln from 1235 to 1253, in whose immense diocese the University of Oxford was situated. About the same time the invention of the art of making paper from linen rags more than made up for the growing lack of parchment and gave a new mechanical impulse to literature.

Meanwhile, the tenacity with which the English language held its ground among the common people caused the ultimate fruit of these movements to appear in the formation of a truly English literature during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

It remains to mention the classes of literature and the chief writers of the period. As literature was cultivated almost entirely by the clergy and the minstrels, nearly all the prose works were in Latin and the poetry in Norman-French, excluding, however, the contemporaneous Semi-Saxon literature (see below, C). An age of violence and oppression permitted but little popular literature, in the proper sense.

I. ANGLO-NORMAN AND ANGLO-SAXON LITERATURE IN LATIN.—1, *Theologians* and *Schoolmen*.—LANFRANC (*circ.* 1005-1089) was a Lombard of Pavia, where, after studying in other Italian Universities, he practised as a pleader. Removing

to Normandy, he opened a school at Avranches (1039), which became a centre of elegant Latinity. In 1042, acting on a devout inspiration, he suddenly joined the small abbey of Bec, was soon elected prior, and opened a school which quickly surpassed that of Avranches. He soon found a wider field for his ambition as the counsellor of Duke William. William sent him on a mission to Rome, where he gained distinction by his defence of the doctrine of the Real Presence against the attacks of Berengarius of Tours. In 1066 (the year of the Conquest) William made him abbot of his new monastery of St. Stephen at Caen, and in 1070 he became Archbishop of Canterbury in place of the deposed Saxon prelate Stigand. His reform of the Anglo-Saxon Church and his severity to its clergy concern us here less than his invitation to learned foreigners, whereby he founded a new school of science and literature in England. His great work was a treatise against Berengarius (written in 1079 or 1080); he also wrote commentaries on the Scriptures, and letters. Many of Lanfranc's works are now lost. ST. ANSELM (1033–1109) was also an Italian, a native of Aosta in Piedmont. His eagerness for learning led him to Bec, where he succeeded Lanfranc as prior and afterwards (1078) became abbot in place of Herluin. Most of his works were composed at Bec, where he gained the highest reputation for piety and taught diligently. On his second visit to England (1092–93) the voice of the bishops and barons forced William Rufus to appoint him to the see of Canterbury in succession to Lanfranc, who had been dead nearly four years. Anselm's troubles in the primacy belong to history rather than to literature; but amidst them all he continued to write and teach. It is unnecessary to enumerate his many works, which are less important than his influence on the learning of the age. They consist of theological and dialectical treatises —the most celebrated of which is the *Cur Deus homo?* a book on the Incarnation of our Lord—homilies, devout meditations, and letters. His claims to a share in the hymnology of the Church are doubtful.

There are many distinguished prelates whose fame is little, if at all, inferior to the fame of these—for example, the illustrious Grosseteste, whom we have already mentioned. Among writers of more general literature, the most interesting is JOHN OF SALISBURY, Bishop of Chartres (d. 1182), who studied for many years at Paris and in the famous Cathedral School of Chartres, and wrote very excellent Latin prose. His chief treatises were the *Metalogicus*, which is full of valuable detail as to medieval education, and the *De Nugis Curialium et Vestigiis Philosophorum.* He also wrote Latin verse. His friend PETER OF BLOIS, Archdeacon of Bath (d. after 1198), wrote letters which throw much light on the characters and manners of his time; he was also the author of many other interesting works, and of a poem on Richard's misfortunes in Palestine. The English Schoolmen were for the most part of the Anglo-Saxon race, and lived chiefly abroad. ALEXANDER OF HALES, the "Irrefragable Doctor," was a native of Gloucestershire and a member of the Franciscan Order. He was the first of the great Franciscan teachers who, side by side with the Dominicans, built up the great fabric of Catholic theology He also was the master of ST. BONAVENTURA, the "Seraphic Doctor," the greatest of medieval mystics. He lived and taught abroad, and died in Paris, 1245. The theology of Alexander of Hales found a more permanent form in the great theological treatise of the Dominican ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, the "Angelic Doctor." At Oxford, however, what was known as the Thomist system of theology was not regarded with favour; and the revolt was headed by JOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS (*c.* 1265–*c.* 1308), the "Subtle Doctor," who taught at Oxford and Paris and died at Bologna. Both Aquinas and Duns Scotus were, as the phrase of the day went, Realists —that is, they believed that each of

our abstract ideas has some real foundation in fact; but, while the followers of Aquinas took the more material view of the mysteries of the faith, the Scotists differed from them in their love of mystical interpretation. The great historical point in Scotus' system is that he and his followers were Franciscans, while the Thomists were Dominicans: his teaching marks the great split between the two chief preaching orders. Both Thomists and Scotists were in their turn combated by another Franciscan, WILLIAM OF OCKHAM (1300–1349), the "Invincible Doctor," who almost certainly studied at Oxford, took his doctor's degree at Paris, and spent most of his life in maintaining the cause of the Emperor Lewis IV against the Pope. He was the head of the school of Nominalists, who held that our abstract ideas are merely general expressions of thought not necessarily corresponding to real existences. Ockham died at Munich. Another remarkable Schoolman was THOMAS BRADWARDINE (*circ.* 1290–1349), the "Profound Doctor," who was philosophically a Realist, but held theological views somewhat novel for his time. He was for the last month of his life Archbishop of Canterbury. At Oxford, too, the Franciscan ROGER BACON (*circ.* 1214–1294), by his devotion to physical science, gained the reputation of a sorcerer. His experiments dimly anticipated some of the great inventions of later times; among them is thought to have been the discovery of gunpowder. His *Opus Majus* is an enquiry into "the *roots of wisdom*," namely, language, mathematics, optics, and experimental science. That he had begun to cast off the scholastic trammels, and already to question nature in the spirit of his great namesake, is shown by his saying, of a disputed fact in physics, "I have tried it, and it is not the fact, but the very reverse."

2. Latin chronicles of past and contemporary history had already been begun before the Conquest. Their writers were Churchmen, and, for the most part, of the Saxon race: with a few exceptions they confined themselves to the history of England. Passing over the very doubtful work ascribed to INGULPHUS, Abbot of Crowland from 1086 to 1109, and its continuation, which goes down to the year 1118, we have a history of the Norman Conquest by WILLIAM OF POITIERS, a follower of the Conqueror. This extends from 1035 to 1067, but the beginning and end are lost; we know that it came down to 1070. FLORENCE OF WORCESTER (d. 1118) —not a lady, as his name might imply at first sight, but a monk— compiled a *Chronicon ex Chronicis* from the Creation to the year of his death, working upon the material contained in the *Saxon Chronicle* and the *Chronology* of Marianus Scotus, an Irish monk. EADMER (d. *circ.* 1124) was a monk of Canterbury: his *Historia Novorum* is chiefly a monument to the fame of St. Anselm. ORDERICUS VITALIS, (1075—after 1143), a native of Shropshire, wrote an ecclesiastical history in thirteen books, from the beginning of the Christian era to 1141. The best of all these chroniclers is WILLIAM OF MALMESBURY (d. *circ.* 1143), who dedicated his history to Robert, Earl of Gloucester, natural son of Henry I. It is in two parts; the *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, in five books, from the landing of Hengist and Horsa to 1120, and the *Historia Novella*, in three books, continued to 1142. The work is written in the spirit and manner of Bede. William also wrote a Life of Wulfstan, a history of the English Bishops, and other works. His contemporary, HENRY OF HUNTINGDON (d. after 1154), also a worthy follower of Bede, although inferior to William, wrote a history of England from the landing of Julius Cæsar to the accession of Henry II. To the eight books of this history he added two additional treatises and three epistles. GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH (d. 1154) also inscribed to Robert, Earl of Gloucester, his *Historia Britonum*, which professes to be a translation of an old chronicle brought over from Brittany by Walter, Archdeacon of Oxford. Its nine books relate the legendary story

of the British kings, from Brutus, the great-grandson of Æneas, to the death of Cadwallader, son of Cadwallo, in 688. The lively Welshman kept his country's traditions free from those rationalising elements which "spoil a good poem, without making a good history," and provided for the romance writers some of their best stories, chief among them that of Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. Geoffrey became Bishop of St. Asaph in 1152. His work was extensively used by ALFRED OF BEVERLEY, and continued by CARADOC OF LLANCARVAN. Caradoc's work is known only in spurious Welsh versions: Powel's *Historia Cambriæ* (1584) professes to be founded on it. Another learned Welshman, GERALD DE BARRI, Archdeacon of St. Davids, better known as GIRALDUS CAMBRENSIS (*circ.* 1146–1220), wrote topographical works on Wales and Ireland, two or three autobiographic pamphlets, and many other treatises, including several Latin poems. He was about the most vigorous and versatile author of his time.

ST. AILRED, Abbot of Rievaulx, (*c.* 1109–1166), has left an admirable account of the Battle of the Standard (1138) and several theological works. ROGER OF HOVEDEN (*i.e.* Howden, near Hull) continued Bede's History from 732 to 1201, transcribing from a continuator of Bede and other authorities. GEOFFREY DE VINSAUF has been credited with an Itinerary of the Crusade, in which he followed Richard Cœur de Lion. Perhaps the most celebrated of the chronicles is the *Chronica Majora* of MATTHEW PARIS, a monk of St. Albans, which extends from the Norman Conquest to the year of his death, 1259. Much of it is a revision of the work of previous St. Albans chroniclers, and chiefly of the *Flores Historiarum* of ROGER OF WENDOVER, who was a monk of St. Albans, and for a short time was Prior of Belvoir. He died on May 6, 1237. Roger's work extends from the Creation to the nineteenth year of Henry III, and the latter part (1189–1235) is very valuable. It was published in five volumes for the English Historical Society by the Rev. H. O. Coxe (1841–44). Another monk of St. Albans, WILLIAM RISHANGER, probably continued the work of Matthew Paris to 1306, and wrote the history of the Barons' Wars. The *Chronicle of St. Albans*, continued from Rishanger by JOHN OF TROKELOWE and others, was revised, as Roger of Wendover's book had been edited by Matthew Paris, by THOMAS WALSINGHAM in his *Historia Anglicana* (edited by H. T. Riley, 1843). NICHOLAS TRIVET wrote an excellent history, from Stephen to Edward I (1136–1307), which was edited by Mr. T. Hog (1845). Another fourteenth-century chronicler is RANULF HIGDEN, a Benedictine monk of St. Werburgh's, in Chester, where he died at a great age in 1364. His *Polychronicon* was a universal history in seven books. Only the part preceding the Norman Conquest was printed in Gale's *Scriptores XV* (published at Oxford, 1691); but John de Trevisa's English translation of the whole work was printed by Caxton, who added an epitome in 1482. Some authorities ascribe to Higden the Chester Mysteries, performed in 1328. The *Chronicle of the Abbey of Bury St. Edmunds* (1173–1202), by JOCELYN DE BRAKELOND, was edited for the first time in 1840, and furnished Carlyle with materials for the vivid picture of the old abbot and his age in *Past and Present*.

Besides the writings of these chroniclers (and several almost as important might be named), we have a mass of public rolls and registers, beginning with *Domesday Book*; but these official documents hardly belong to literature. The more important chronicles and the work of men like Giraldus Cambrensis have appeared in the invaluable Rolls Series, and translations of some of them are to be found in the volumes of Bohn's Historical Series, published by Mr. G. Bell.

3. The frequent resort of Englishmen to the University of Bologna, where the foundations of the Civil Law had been laid by Irnerius, gave an impulse to the study in England,

This excited the emulation of the great masters of the Common Law and so produced, towards the end of the twelfth century, the first great treatise on the laws of England—the *Tractatus de Legibus et Consuetudinibus Angliæ*, by the chief justiciary, RANULF DE GLANVILLE (d. 1190).

4. The Letters of the leading Churchmen of the age, beside the value of their matter, afford many good specimens of Latin composition. Beginning with Lanfranc and St. Anselm, the series comes down to THOMAS BECKET and STEPHEN LANGTON; but by far the most valuable for their matter and the most interesting for their literary excellence are those of John of Salisbury and Peter of Blois, which reveal to us much both of the political and the scholastic history of the latter half of the twelfth century. The letters of Robert Grosseteste have been edited by Dr. Luard (1861), and the works of John of Salisbury are thoroughly analysed in the monograph of Dr. Schaarschmidt (Leipsic, 1862).

5. Latin poetry was cultivated as an elegant accomplishment by the men of learning, Lawrence of Durham, Henry of Huntingdon, John of Salisbury, John de Hauteville, and others. But a more natural though irregular school was formed under the influence of the minstrels, whose accentual system of verse, applied to Latin in defiance of quantity, gave rise to the "Leonine" verse, the metre of epigram, satire, and, to a certain extent, of the hymns of the Church. The term "Leonine" describes specifically verses rhymed as well as accentual, but both forms are common. Leonine verse was naturalised in Europe by the end of the eleventh century, and was applied to hymnology by St. Bernard, St. Thomas Aquinas, and, traditionally, Pope Innocent III. Great hymn-writers, like Adam of St. Victor, flourished in the following centuries; everyone is familiar with hymns like the *Stabat Mater* or Thomas of Celano's *Dies Iræ*. A curious instance of the use of Leonine verse in England is furnished by the epitaph on Bede, the first line of which—

"Continet hæc theca Bedæ venerabilis ossa"

—was transformed by later ingenuity into—

"Continet hæc fossa Bedæ venerabilis ossa."

A further stage of licence is seen in the frivolous "Macaronic Poetry," which abounds not only in Latin words of the strangest formation, but in mixtures of different languages. The following example, in Latin, French, and English, belongs to the early part of Edward II's reign:—

"*Quant homme deit parleir*, videat quae verba loquatur,
Sen covent aver, ne stultior inveniatur,
Quando quis loquitur, *bote resoun reste therynne*,
Derisum patitur, *ant lutel so shall he wynne*."

"This confusion of tongues led very naturally to the corruption of them all, and consequently none of them were written or spoken as correctly as at the period when they were kept distinct."

But the Leonine, as indeed also the regular verse, was chiefly used for satire directed against the vices of the age—and especially by the secular clergy and laymen. Here is one example:—

"Mille annis jam peractis.
Nulla fides est in pactis:
Mel in ore, verba lactis,
Fel in corde, fraus in factis."

It was employed also for all manner of light and satiric pieces. The earliest known writer in this style was HILARIUS, a disciple of Abelard, and probably an Englishman, who flourished about 1125. A mass of such poetry, probably by various writers, is ascribed to WALTER MAP or MAPES, a writer of the time of Henry II, who was Archdeacon of Oxford, parson of Westbury-on-Trym in Gloucestershire, and Precentor and Chancellor of Lincoln. These poems bear the general title of *Confessio Goliæ*, their hero, Bishop Golias, being taken as the type of loose livers.

Map also wrote in regular Latin verse, and left a book of prose reminiscences called *De Nugis Curialium*. He was an author, too, in Anglo-Norman poetry and prose, chiefly on the legends of Arthur; and altogether he seems to have been one of the most active minds of the age.

The regular Latin writers were up in arms against Leonine verse. Geoffrey de Vinsauf, already noticed as a chronicler, addressed to Pope Innocent III a regular poem, *De Nova Poetria*, which is of great merit and contains interesting allusions to contemporary history. His overstrained lament for Richard's death is satirised by Chaucer even while addressing him as—

"O Gaufred, dere mayster soverayn."

One of the last and best examples of the regular Latin poetry is the work of JOSEPHUS ISCANUS, *i.e.* Joseph of Exeter (fl. 1190). His *De Bello Trojano* was so popular as to be used in schools side by side with the classic poets. He also wrote a Latin poem, entitled *Antiocheis*, on Richard's expedition to Palestine. But this class of poetry was doomed to extinction before a more vigorous rival than the Leonines—the vernacular poetry which sprang up in imitation of the French minstrelsy—and it had almost disappeared by the middle of the thirteenth century.

II. The ANGLO-NORMAN FRENCH LITERATURE was, as has been already observed, chiefly in verse, and was the production of laymen, whether of professional minstrels, or of knights and even kings, who deemed it a gentleman-like accomplishment to sing as well as act the deeds of chivalry. RICHARD CŒUR DE LION (d. 1199) was the type of the latter class; and the style which he cultivated and patronised was that of the Troubadours (see the text). Everyone knows the legend of the discovery of the place where he was imprisoned by his *tenson* (*i.e. contentio*, or song of question and answer) with the minstrel Blondel; and his *sirvente* (a song of military service, from *servitium*) against his barons, composed in prison, has come down to us with a few other fragments. But the great mass of the poetry which the Normans brought in was derived from the Trouvères. It may be arranged in four classes:—(1) Romances, relating chiefly to these four cycles of legends: *Charlemagne and his Paladins*, of whom the Norman minstrel Taillefer is said to have sung at Hastings; *Arthur and his Knights*, founded on the legends of Wales and Brittany; the exploits and sufferings of *Cœur de Lion*; and *Alexander of Macedon*, the chief poem of the cycle (the *Alexandreis*, 1184), giving its name to the "Alexandrine" verse. (2) The Fabliaux, or Metrical Tales of Real Life, often derived from the East. (3) Satires, of which the Æsopian fable was a common form, as in the tale of *Reynard the Fox*, common to all Europe; and (4) the Metrical Chronicles. Of these last a most important example is the *Brut d'Angleterre* of ROBERT WACE (d. after 1171), a native of Guernsey, who also wrote, in French, the *Roman de Rou* (*Romance of Rollo*). His *Brut*, borrowed from Geoffrey of Monmouth, became the source of the *Brut* of Layamon (see below). Although this French poetry is of great importance in our literature, as it furnished both subjects and models for the later English poets, there are few of its writers whose names require special mention. We have religious and moral poems in French belonging to a very early date, and the universally accomplished Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, wrote in this as well as in other styles. Geoffrey de Vinsauf composed metrical chronicles in French as well as Latin. An important chronicler was BENOIT DE SAINTE MORE (d. about 1180), who wrote the *Chronicles of the Dukes of Normandy* at the command of Henry I and subsequently composed the *Romance of Troy*. GEOFFREY GAIMAR (about 1148) wrote a *Chronicle of the Anglo-Saxon Kings*. THOROLD was th author of the *Roman de Roland*, and

a *Roman d'Alexandre* is ascribed to THOMAS OF KENT, who is variously placed in the twelfth and fourteenth centuries. A lady Trouvère, MARIE DE FRANCE, flourished at the Court of Henry III and wrote love-songs and romances which are of considerable literary importance. The *Roman de la Rose*, imitated by Chaucer, is the earliest French work of the thirteenth century and may be said definitely to have inaugurated the allegorical spirit which fastened itself upon English poetry during the next three centuries. It was the work of two Trouvères from the banks of the Loire, Guillaume de Lorris and Jehan de Meung. Other favourite romances were *Havelock the Dane*, the *Gest of King Horn*, *Bevis of Hampton*, and *Guy of Warwick*. Most of the authors of these works were native Englishmen, although they wrote in French, which had become almost the sole vehicle of popular literature.

The prose versions of the Romances in Norman-French were written chiefly by Englishmen. The most important series was formed by those of Arthur, containing the *Roman du Saint Graal* (the Holy Chalice of the Last Supper), the *Roman de Merlin*, the *Roman de Lancelot*, the *Quête du Saint Graal*, and the *Roman de la Mort Artus*, with a sequel in two parts, the *Roman de Tristan* (or Tristram). The chief writer was Walter Map (already mentioned); but the *Roman du Saint Graal* and the *Roman de Merlin* were written by ROBERT DE BORRON, the *Tristan* by a fictitious LUCAS DE GAST, and the continuation of the *Tristan*, known as *Gyron le Courtois*, by HELIE DE BORRON.

These Romances were collected and digested by the excellent knight SIR THOMAS MALORY, who lived during the reign of Edward IV, in the popular romance of *Le Morte Arthur*, now so easily accessible to all readers.

Excepting some versions of portions of Holy Scripture, these are the only important works in Anglo-Norman prose, until we come to the grand Chronicle of SIRE JEHAN FROISSART, the liveliest picture which an imaginative historian ever drew of events witnessed for the most part by himself. Froissart was born at Valenciennes about 1337, but his Chronicle extends over the whole reigns of Edward III and Richard II (1326–1400). He was also a poet, and on his last visit to England (1396) presented his poetical works to Richard II.

C.—SEMI-SAXON LITERATURE.

A.D. 1150–1250.

The end of the *Saxon Chronicle* marks the close of the old Anglo-Saxon language as well as literature; for the chronicler does not throw down his pen before he has begun to confuse his grammar and to corrupt his vocabulary with French words. The language dies out in literature, to appear again as almost a new creation, the basis of our English, but not at first in a finished form. The state of transition occupies about two centuries, from a time near the accession of Henry II (1154) to the middle of the reign of Edward III (1350), when Chaucer rose. The compositions of this age can hardly be divided by any clear line of demarcation; but the first of the two centuries, to the middle of Henry III's reign, may be conveniently assigned to the Semi-Saxon period, the second to the Old English. The writers in both dialects were for the most part translators and imitators of the Norman poets; and their works may be assigned to the four heads under which we have classed Norman work. There are, however, a few more original fragments, such as the *Song of Canute*, as he rowed past Ely, recorded by the monk of Ely, who wrote about 1166, or the Hymn of ST. GODRIC (d. 1170). But three chief works may be chosen as most characteristic of the language of the Semi-Saxon period.

(1.) LAYAMON'S *Brut* or *Chronicle of Britain*, of which there are two texts, one much earlier than the other. The title of the "English Ennius," formerly applied to Robert

of Gloucester, may now be fairly transferred to Layamon. He tells us that he was a priest of Ernley, near Redstone, on the Severn (certainly Areley Regis, near Bewdley), and that he compiled his work partly from a book in English by St. Bede—which can only mean Alfred's translation of the *Historia Ecclesiastica*—partly from one in Latin by Saints Albin and Austin, and partly from one made by a French clerk named Wace, and presented to Eleanor, queen of Henry II. He seems, however, to have followed Bede only in the story of St. Gregory and the English slaves at Rome; his second authority appears to be but a confused reference to the Latin text of the *Historia Ecclesiastica*; and his work was really founded upon the *Brut* of Wace, which has been already noticed. This he amplified from 15,300 lines to 32,250, partly by paraphrasing, partly by inserting speeches and other compositions, such as the Dream of Arthur, which show much imaginative power, and partly by the addition of many legends, from Welsh and other sources, not used by Geoffrey of Monmouth. He makes several allusions to works in English which are now lost. The date of the completion of the work, usually assigned to the latter years of Henry II, should probably be brought down to a date after 1200, subsequent to the accession of John. The style of the work bears witness to Norman influence, both in the structure of the verse and in the manner of the narrative, but not nearly so much as might have been expected from the translator of a French original. The earlier text has not fifty words of French origin, and both texts only about ninety. "We find preserved," says Sir F. Madden, "in Layamon's poem the spirit and style of the earlier Anglo-Saxon writers. No one can read his description of battles without being reminded of the Ode on Athelstan's victory at Brunanburh." After noticing resemblances in grammar and language, he adds, "A foreign scholar and poet (Grundtvig), versed both in Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian literature, has found Layamon's verse beyond comparison the most lofty and animated in its style, at every moment reminding the reader of the splendid phraseology of Anglo-Saxon verse. It may also be added that the colloquial character of much of the work renders it peculiarly valuable as a monument of the language, since it serves to convey to us, in all probability, the current speech of the writer's time." His verse also retains the alliterative structure of the Anglo-Saxon poetry, mingled with and predominating over the rhymed couplets of the French. Besides *alliteration*, which consists in the sameness of initial consonants, Layamon uses the kindred device of *assonance*, that is, the concurrence of syllables containing the same vowel. The rhyming couplets are founded (as Dr. Guest has shown in his *History of English Rhythms*) on the Anglo-Saxon rhythms of 4, 5, 6, or 7 accents, those of 5 and 6 being the most frequent. Sir F. Madden, in his edition of the *Brut* (Society of Antiquaries, 3 vols., 1847), fully discusses the important bearing of Layamon's dialect on the history and formation of the English language. He concludes that "the dialects of the western, southern, and midland counties contributed together to form the language of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and consequently to lay the foundation of modern English." To the historical student the *Brut* is important as the last and fullest form of the old Celtic traditions concerning early British history.

(2.) The *Ancren Riwle* (the Rule of Female Anchorites, *i.e. Nuns*), a code of precepts for the nuns of Tarrant Keynes in Dorset, drawn up in prose by an unknown author about the end of the twelfth century or the beginning of the thirteenth, and edited for the Camden Society by the Rev. Jas. Morton (1853), is also most valuable for the history of our language. Its proportion of French words is about four times that of Layamon; the English is rude, and the spelling uncouth.

(3.) The *Ormulum* is so called by the author after his own name,

ORM or ORMIN. It was a series of homilies in verse on the lessons from the New Testament in the Church Service, and was on an immense scale. The extant portion contains neary 10,000 lines (or, rather, couplets) of fifteen syllables, differing from the "common service metre" only in ending with an unaccented syllable, and entirely free from the Anglo-Saxon alliteration. Apart from the peculiar system of spelling, treated by the author with great importance and thoroughly deserving study, its language differs far less than Layamon's from that of the present day. Its author was an Augustinian canon living in the east or north-east of England, and it therefore occupies a place in the Anglian literature answering to that of the *Brut* in the Saxon. The inference is that the Anglian dialect was the first to throw off the old inflections. The work exists only in one MS. (in the Bodleian Library), which is thought to be the autograph; its handwriting, ink, and material, seem to assign it to the earlier part of the thirteenth century. The character of the language and the regular rhythm of the verse, however, lead some to place it decidedly after the middle of the thirteenth century, and therefore in the Old English period.

The versification seems to be modelled on the contemporary Latin poetry. The language has a small admixture of Latin ecclesiastical words, with scarcely a trace of Norman-French. Mr. Marsh was "much disposed to believe that the spelling of the *Ormulum* constitutes as faithful a representation of the oral English of its time as any one work could be at a period of great confusion of speech." The work was edited with Notes and a Glossary by Dr. R. M. White (2 vols.; Oxford, 1852), and the chief features of his edition have been retained by Mr. Holt in his more modern edition (Clarendon Press, 1878; 2 vols.)

Among other works in Semi-Saxon that have been printed are the *Homily of St. Edmund*, in Thorpe's *Analecta*; the *Bestiary* and *Proverbs*, falsely ascribed to King Alfred, in the *Reliquiæ Antiquæ*; the *Address of the Soul to the Body*, an early work, found both in the Exeter and in the Vercelli Book, printed by Sir Thomas Phillipps in 1838, and reprinted by Mr. Singer in 1845; and the *Legend of St. Katharine*, edited by Mr. Morton for the Abbotsford Club (1841).

D.—OLD ENGLISH LITERATURE.

A.D. 1250–1350.

By the middle of the reign of Henry III the language finally lost those inflectional and other peculiarities which distinguish the Anglo-Saxon from the English; but it retains archaisms which sufficiently distinguish it from the language of the present day to justify the title of Old English.

Some regard the short proclamation of Henry III (1258) as the earliest monument of Old English, while others consider it Semi-Saxon, The *Surtees Psalter* stands also on the line dividing the two periods, being probably not later than 1250.

Among the chief literary works of this period is the metrical *Chronicle* of ROBERT OF GLOUCESTER, from the legendary age of Brutus to the close of Henry III's reign. The date is unknown, but it is certain that Robert must have been alive during the Barons' Wars, and the latter part of the chronicle is supposed to have been written after 1297. The earlier part closely follows Geoffrey of Monmouth; but the old prose chronicler was far more of a poet than his metrical imitator. The verse is the long line (or couplet) of fourteen syllables, divisible into eight and six; its movement is rough and inharmonious. The *Chronicle* was printed from incorrect MSS. by Thomas Hearne (2 vols.; Oxford, 1724), and this edition was reprinted in London, 1810. A more modern edition is that of Mr. Aldis Wright (in Rolls Series; 2 vols. 1887). Short works attributed to Robert of Gloucester, on the *Martyrdom of St. Thomas à Becket* and the *Life of St. Brandan*, were printed by the Percy Society in

1845. A collection of Lives of the Saints is also attributed to this author, whose works, although of small literary merit, are valuable for the light they throw on the progress of the English language.

On a still larger scale is the metrical chronicle of ROBERT MANNYNG, or ROBERT OF BRUNNE (fl. 1288–1338), the last considerable work of the Old English period. It is in two parts. The first, adapted from Wace's *Brut*, reaches to the death of Cadwallader; the second, copied from the Anglo-Norman of Peter de Langtoft, comes down to the death of Edward I (1307). The work is evidently an imitation of Robert's and is of about equal literary merit. The language is a step nearer to modern English, the most important changes being the use of *s* for *th* in the third person singular and the closer approach to the present forms of the feminine personal pronoun. The verse is smoother than Robert of Gloucester's. The first part is in the eight-syllable line of Wace; the second is partly in the same metre, and partly in the Alexandrine, the heroic measure of the age. Mannyng was a canon of the exclusively English order of Gilbertines and was a member of their chief house at Sempringham near Bourn (or Brunne, as it was then spelt). He also wrote a moral allegory called *Handlyng Synne*, which is of great literary importance.

Far more interesting in themselves are the popular poems of this age, which were, for the most part, translated or imitated from the French, and belong to the same classes of Romances, Fabliaux, and Satires. But there are some ballads and songs of genuine native origin as early as the middle of the thirteenth century. Such are the story of the Norfolk peasant-boy, *Willy Grice*; the song beginning "Sumer is i-cumen in" (the oldest song to which the notes are added), and many of the pieces (including political ballads) printed by Warton, Percy, Ritson, and Wright.

One of the most important of these poems is the *Owl and the Nightingale*, a dispute between the two birds as to their powers of song. It consists of about 1800 verses in rhymed octosyllabic metre.

The satirical poem called *The Land of Cockayne*, which Warton placed before Henry II's reign, is at least as late as 1300 and has been traced to a French original. It is somewhat doubtfully ascribed, with other poems, to MICHAEL OF KILDARE, the first Irishman who wrote verses in English. That the metrical Romances should have been translated from the French is a natural result of the fact that French was, for some generations after the Conquest, the language of popular literature. Many of the legends were, indeed, British and Anglo-Saxon; but this may be accounted for by the affinity of the Britons and Armoricans and the close connection between kings like Edward the Confessor and their Norman neighbours. Nor is it probable that the Trouvères would have missed many of these legends. Their poetry at first amused the leisure and enlivened the banquets of the conquerors; but, as the two races became one, and as the Anglo-Saxon tongue died out, these lays began to be translated into the new-formed language of the English people. The most popular of these, such as *Havelock*, *Sir Tristram*, *Sir Gawayne*, *William of Palerne*, *Amis and Amiloun*, *Kynge Horne*, *Kynge Alisaundre*, and *Richard Cœur de Lion*—some metrical, others alliterative—may be referred to the beginning of Edward I's reign. They are followed by a series of poems by unknown authors, far too numerous to mention, down to and considerably later than the age of Chaucer, many of which are printed in the collections mentioned below. The change by which these English metrical Romances superseded the French originals may be referred to the fourteenth century. In the fifteenth their popularity, besides being divided with the prose Romances, yielded, at least among the educated classes, to the regular poetry of Chaucer and his school; but they ceased to be written generally only after the beginning of the sixteenth. It was not until 300 years later that

Sir Walter Scott revived the taste for a kind of poetry, similar in form, but appealing to very different sentiments. Among the minor poems, other than Romances, are many imitations of the French Fabliaux or Tales of Common Life. The Satires, both political and ecclesiastical, undoubtedly helped the progress of freedom under Henry III and his successors and prepared the way for Wycliffe, if they do not rather exhibit a state of popular feeling demanding such a teacher.

The chief authorities for these four periods are: Wright, *Biographia Britannica Literaria*. Vol. I.—*The Anglo-Saxon Period*. London, 1842. Vol. II.—*The Anglo-Norman Period*. London, 1846; Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, first published in 1765; Warton, *History of English Poetry*, 1774, edited by W. C. Hazlitt, London, 1871; Tyrwhitt, *Chaucer's Canterbury Tales*, with preliminary essays, 1775, also Dr. Skeat's edition, 1894–7; Pinkerton, *Scottish Poems*, 3 vols., 1792; Herbert, *Robert the Devylle*, 1798; Ritson, *Ancient Songs*, 1783, and *Ancient English Metrical Romances*, 1802; George Ellis, *Specimens of Early English Metrical Romances*, 3 vols., 1805; Wright, *Political Songs of England* from John to Edward II, 1839; the publications of the Roxburghe Club, the Surtees, Bannatyne, Maitland, Abbotsford, and Camden Societies, the Society of Antiquaries, etc.; Chambers, *Cyclopædia of English Literature*; Craik, *History of English Literature and the English Language*, 2 vols., 1861; Marsh, *Origin and History of the English Language*, 1862. Since then sources of information, especially with regard to the earlier periods, are become more abundant, and the publications of the Early English Text Society, together with the cheap editions of old texts issued by the Clarendon Press, make the study of our early literature a comparatively easy task. Students will find Mr. Stopford Brooke's *Early English Literature up to the Days of Alfred* (2 vols.), and his smaller book, *English Literature from the Beginning to the Norman Conquest* (1898), very valuable. Professor Ten Brink's *History of Early English Literature* (translation published by Mr. G. Bell, 3 vols.) is a standard work on the subject. For the medieval period, Professor Courthope's *History of English Poetry*, vol. i. (1895), is the latest authority; and, for the philosophy of the schools, Mr. Rashdall's monumental *Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages* (2 vols. in 3; Oxford, 1895) should be consulted.

CHAPTER II.

CHAUCER—*circ.* 1340–1400.

§ 1. Chaucer's relation to his age; his studies; his debt to French and Italian poets; his original genius. § 2. Life of Chaucer. § 3. Chaucer's writings. Earlier poems: translation of *Roman de la Rose; Complaint to Pity*, etc.; *Book of the Duchess; Life of St. Cecilia.* Italian influence: the stories of *Constance* and *Griselda*, etc. § 4. Chaucer's original treatment of his authorities: *Palamon and Arcite; Anelida; Troilus and Criseyde; Parliament of Fowls; The House of Fame; The Legend of Good Women.* § 5. *The Canterbury Tales.* § 6. Other works. § 7. Concluding remarks.

§ 1. BY the end of the fourteenth century, the English language had recovered from the confusion of dialects which followed the Anglo-Saxon period. In the time of Chaucer, and to a great extent through the influence of his writings, one of the English dialects became the standard of literary English. From the time of Alfred to the Conquest the language of Wessex, the Southern dialect of Old English, had been the literary language. Its place was filled in the following ages down to the time of Chaucer, not by any form of English, but by the French of the Court, or by the Latin, which came to be more in favour with English writers as their native tongue declined in dignity and importance. English literature during this intervening period was a literature of competing dialects; those who wrote in their native tongue wrote not for the nation at large, but primarily for their immediate neighbours in the country, who spoke the peculiar speech of the West, or the North, or whatever the district might be to which the author belonged. By the year of Chaucer's death (1400) this state of things had been very greatly altered. Other dialects were still in use; one of them, the Northern dialect of English, was becoming in Scotland a national language with a literature of its own; but in England from the time of Chaucer it became more and more difficult for English writers to use any form of the language except that which agreed with the usage of Chaucer. The language of modern English literature is derived in the main from the East Midland dialect, which, in Chaucer's time, took the place of French as the right "courtly" language, thereby disqualifying the other dialects for employment in literary works, and permitting them to fall back into the

Chaucer's influence on English.

position of rustic popular speech, for which no distinguished literary career was open.

This recovery of English, the restoration of the language to its proper office as the right and natural means of literary expression for authors born in England, took place at the close of the Middle Ages, at a time when the old medieval literary traditions were still alive, though beginning to show signs of exhaustion, while at the same time a number of new ideas were beginning to make themselves felt in different ways. Chaucer, by his disposition and genius, found himself drawn to study almost every subject of interest in his time, and to practise a great variety of kinds of composition. The result is that his collected works represent almost all the intellectual tastes and fashions of his own time, and to a very great extent also those of the three preceding centuries.

Chaucer and his age.

This aspect of Chaucer is of some importance in a history of literature. It is true that it does not present Chaucer as a great original writer, as one of the great poets. But it is a view that is naturally suggested by the mass of Chaucer's writings. His writings are not all equally good; he was a student and a man of learning; he felt very strongly the attractions of study, and he was fond of expounding what he knew. He was also a great poet. But in order to understand his poetry it is necessary to take into account a number of things in his writings that did not directly help his poetry, and that even tended to interfere with his poetical imagination. The common quality in all his writings is that of a mind open to receive all influences. It is this which has made him in each part of his works, and in all his works taken together, so complete a representative of his own times. Besides being a great poet he was also a working man of letters, with the instinct of a journalist for everything that was capable of attracting any reader. Whatever effect this habit of mind may have had upon his poetry, there can be no question that it was this which gave him most of his influence as the founder of modern English literature. The Chaucerian poets in the next century, and even later, generally preferred to imitate those parts of Chaucer's writings which were most easily imitated: not the vivid original passages in *The Canterbury Tales*, but the commonplace allegory, the traditional sentiment, which Chaucer had taken up because it came in his way, and because it was part of the literary tradition of his time.

This part of Chaucer's work is not the most interesting, but it is possible that it may be undervalued. To represent Chaucer as a teacher, a reformer of the common standard of literature, a populariser of knowledge, may appear derogatory to his fame as a poet; but it is far from certain that Chaucer himself would have disliked the reputation of a popular teacher; while it is plain enough that his teaching was much wanted.

What he did was to present the current ideas and fancies of the Middle Ages in the best possible form before they were supplanted by other ideas. One of the misfortunes of English history in the Middle Ages was that the great medieval ideas were never adequately expressed in English during the time when they were most vigorous in other countries. For some of the most distinctive medieval fashions were inextricably bound up with the usages of Courts, and required for their expression a courtly language, such as was never wanting in France, such as was to be found in Provence from the beginning of the twelfth century, in Germany rather later (A.D. 1200), and in Italy in the time of Dante (A.D. 1300). This was not to be found in England before Chaucer. English authors, like all the rest of the world, did their best to appropriate the chivalrous and courtly literature produced in France from the twelfth century onward; but whether they failed or succeeded in giving life of some sort to their translations, they necessarily failed to catch the grace of their originals, for the language at their disposal, in all its history and its associations, was the language of uncourtly people. The best of English poetry in the fourteenth century, apart from Chaucer, the alliterative poetry of the authors of *Sir Gawayne* and of *Piers Plowman*, is not inferior to the best of the French courtly school; it has excellences of its own, energy and originality, which need not fear comparison with any author; but by its very excellences, which are part of its strong provincial character, it is disqualified from representing the peculiar medieval cast of thought, the ideas of the great ages of chivalry. These ideas appear in the English alliterative poets, sometimes grotesquely out of keeping with their expression, as in the poem of *William of Palerne*, sometimes transposed with great mastery into the peculiar alliterative mode, as in *Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight*; but neither in the one case nor the other is there the distinctive manner of the great medieval schools. Good or bad, they are uncourtly; and this failure in courtliness, in spite of all compensations in other ways, was so far a misfortune for English literature and for the nation itself, that it involved a loss of those general elements of culture which it had been the business of the Middle Ages, and chiefly of medieval France, to disperse over all the world. It was this defect that Chaucer set himself to make good. Before he was a great poet he was a "great translator," as the French poet Eustache Deschamps called him, and he was a translator of a different kind from his predecessors. He was thoroughly at home in the world of courtly sentiment, and when he wrote it was neither a travesty nor an adaptation; it was the thing itself, the English expression being now for the first time equal in refinement to the French, and in full command of all the French resources.

Contrast with his predecessors.

Chaucer begins his literary career as a translator of French poems and adapter of French forms and ideas. He depended chiefly, as was natural, upon the French poets most in vogue at the time; principally Guillaume de Machault, the secretary of King John of Bohemia, Eustache Deschamps (*c.* 1345–*c.* 1405), Jean Froissart (1337–1410), and Oton de Granson, the "floure of hem that maken in France," whose poems, including the original of Chaucer's *Complaint of Venus*, have only recently been discovered. Besides these contemporary poets Chaucer gave much attention to one of the favourite books of the previous century, the *Roman de la Rose*.

His studies in French

By these authors his style was formed, and however much he afterwards learned from other sources (including his own invention) he never lost his allegiance to his first masters. With all his later devotion to the Italian poets it is noticeable that, but for a fragmentary experiment in the *terza rima* of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Chaucer makes no attempt to introduce an Italian stanza. He drew more from Boccaccio than from any poet, yet he never used the octave stanza of the poems from which he derived his *Palamon and Arcite* and his *Troilus and Criseyde*. He turned the Italian octaves into the seven-line stanza (known as *rhyme royal*) which was commonly in use among his French authors. The heroic couplet, the favourite verse of his later years in *The Legend of Good Women* and great part of *The Canterbury Tales*, was taken from the same source. While, with regard to matter, the Prologue to *The Legend of Good Women*, in its use of the old devices—the dream, the May morning, the allegorical pageant, all from the tradition of *The Romaunt of the Rose*—is proof of the vitality of his early literary affections, and of the inability of Italian or any other studies to make him forget his early devotion to the French poets.

His acquaintance with Italian literature probably began about the time of his Italian journey (1372). There is no trace of it in *The Book of the Duchess* (1369), nor, indeed, till about ten years later. In whatever manner it began, the influence of the Italian poets was incalculably great, and though the French manner is never wholly discarded, all Chaucer's later works show evident tokens of his study of the Italian, especially of Boccaccio, in a second degree of Dante, and of Petrarch not quite so much as might have been expected, from the laudatory mention of him in the Clerk's Prologue.

and Italian literature.

From the French poets Chaucer had learned much: graceful sentiment and expression; the allegorical method; the mode of putting together in a poem all sorts of quaint and learned illustrations; above all, the forms of verse. But the French school had very serious faults, and Chaucer did not escape them; garrulity and in-

His debt to both.

coherence being the worst. The French courtly poets were never tired; they could repeat for ever the same round of sentiment with the same conventional decorations. From the Italians Chaucer learned a different conception of poetry. Petrarch he probably found too like the French, at any rate in the matter of his Italian poems, in which Petrarch, with all his command of a new style, was still in debt to the old medieval conventions. But Dante and Boccaccio had something definitely new to teach him. Dante was the first modern to make a definite consistent use of the classical methods of poetry; and Boccaccio was one of Dante's first disciples. It was from him chiefly that Chaucer learned his new manner. Boccaccio had a genius for narrative, and beyond that he was full of zeal for classical learning, for strict following of the classical examples. In translating Boccaccio's poems, the *Teseide* and the *Filostrato* (*i.e. Palamon and Arcite* and *Troilus*), Chaucer learned the secrets of construction, how to plan a story and carry it out in due proportion. He also learned from Boccaccio, or from Dante and Boccaccio, the use of some poetical devices which have frequently been misused, but are never too old or hackneyed, such as the common form of epic simile, derived originally from Homer, and familiar to the Middle Ages in their Virgil and other Latin authors, though it appears not to have been transferred to the poetry of the new languages before the great poem of Dante.

> "But right as floures, thorugh the colde of night
> Y-closed, stoupen on hir stalkes lowe,
> Redressen hem a-yein the sonne bright,
> And spreden on hir kinde cours by rowe."
>
> (*Troilus*, B. II., st. 139.)

This simile is translated from Boccaccio, who borrowed it with very little disguise from the second canto of the *Inferno*. From Chaucer's time onward, this kind of figure is part of the equipment of all English poets. It is the most obvious proof of the influence of Italian on English poetry in the fifteenth century.

From the Italians Chaucer learned much more than the use of those rhetorical formulas which are to be picked up by any writer, good or bad. At first, it is true, he contented himself with translation, and the Italian influence is traceable only in the more ample and more even narrative replacing the less dignified and less regular manner of the French school. But mere translation or repetition was not at this date enough to satisfy Chaucer's ambition; nor was it enough to learn the details of the Italian workmanship, for example, in the use of the figures of speech, without mastering their principles of construction. The great turning-point in Chaucer's literary life, after his first Italian studies, is where he learns to apply the Italian principles of composition in his own way. It may be

said that the poem in which he is most indebted to an Italian poet, *Troilus and Criseyde*, is also that in which he is most independent. He has not translated Boccaccio; he has discovered in the Italian poet the secret of his harmonious composition, and he turns this to his own account in a way of his own invention. Chaucer's *Troilus* is a very different thing from Boccaccio's *Filostrato*, and the difference is made by that original humour and that faculty of drawing upon his own experience in virtue of which the Prologue to *The Canterbury Tales* has kept its freshness for five centuries. This Prologue produces a startling effect by contrast with such early pieces as *The Complaint to Pity*, and has been very naturally considered as the effect of a strong original inclination for comic or satiric poetry finding its own mode of expression, and throwing off all authority of masters and precepts. This view requires to be modified by one consideration at least, namely, that Chaucer at the time when he was working hardest to appropriate the lessons of Boccaccio—in his *Troilus*—was also writing original comic poetry for the same poem, without any help from anyone, and with no less success than in the Prologue, though the Prologue is better known.

Summary of influences.

Thus Chaucer's poetry represents, among other things, the old courtly medieval tradition, the chivalrous love-poetry which was already rather old-fashioned, but still had some beauty of its own; also, and much more fully, the Italian discoveries of the fourteenth century, the first successful attempts to form a modern literature on classical lines; while over and above all this, there is Chaucer's own faculty as a poet gradually disengaging itself from all contemporary fashions and coming out clear and distinct from the medieval traditions. In the case of few writers is the increase of power so clearly recognisable or the alteration of poetical ambition so easily traced in the successive manners of working. At the same time Chaucer is always ready to fall back into his earlier ways of thinking, and to the end of his life he shows a tolerance almost incredible for everything, however commonplace, touching the subjects in which he has once been interested.

Life of Chaucer.

§ 2. Geoffrey Chaucer was born, probably about the year 1340, the son of John Chaucer, a citizen of London and a wine merchant, who appears to have had some connection with the Court. He spent some time in his youth in the service of Elizabeth, Countess of Ulster, wife of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, the third son of Edward III. In 1359 he was in the wars in France, and was taken prisoner: his ransom was made up on March 1, 1360, the king contributing £16. He appears to have entered the king's service shortly after as a Yeoman of the King's Chamber, becoming in due time esquire. In 1367 he was still yeoman

—*valettus*—in receipt of a salary of twenty marks. Whether he was at that time married is uncertain: Philippa Chaucer received a pension in 1366 as one of the Damsels of the Queen's Chamber, and Philippa Chaucer is found mentioned as Geoffrey's wife in 1374. In 1369 Chaucer wrote *The Book of the Duchess*, a poem in memory of Blanche of Lancaster, wife of John of Gaunt. In the same year he was in France taking part in the war there. In the year 1370 he was employed in diplomatic business abroad, and in the end of 1372 he was sent on his first mission to Italy to make an agreement with Genoa as to a Genoese trading factory in England. He visited Florence, and possibly also may have gone to Padua and met Petrarch there. In 1374 the king granted him a pitcher of wine daily; this grant was afterwards commuted for a pension of twenty marks. Later, in 1374, Chaucer was appointed Comptroller of the Customs and Subsidy of Wools, Skins and Tanned Hides in the Port of London; he was at this time in possession of a house over the gate of Aldgate. He continued to be employed in diplomatic affairs, going to Flanders, and again to France in 1377. This was the year of Edward III's death, an event which did not make any change in Chaucer's fortunes. In 1378 he went to Italy a second time, taking part in an embassy to Bernabò Visconti, lord of Milan, and Sir John Hawkwood, the great mercenary captain of that time in Italy. Chaucer on this occasion named John Gower as one of his representatives in his absence. Chaucer's studies of Italian literature are of course connected with his travels in Italy. For some years after this his prosperity increased: in 1382 he was made Comptroller of the Petty Customs of the Port of London, in addition to his previous office; in 1386 he went to Parliament as one of the knights of the shire for Kent. In this year, however, he began to suffer reverses, principally owing to the fall of his patron, John of Gaunt; he lost both his places in the Customs, and was obliged to realise his pensions for ready money. In 1389 things improved again on John of Gaunt's return to power: Chaucer was made Clerk of the King's Works at the Palace of Westminster, the Tower of London, various royal manors and lodges, and the mews at Charing Cross. He lost these appointments, however, in 1391. The king was persuaded to come to his assistance in 1394, and a new pension was granted to Chaucer for life. After the deposition of Richard II (1399), the new king, Henry IV, may have recognised that Chaucer had some claim upon him as an old follower of the House of Lancaster: at any rate he granted him a further pension of forty marks. Chaucer died in the following year (October 25, 1400) in a house of which he had just taken a lease, in Westminster. He is buried in the Abbey.

§ 3. Of the works of Chaucer probably one of the earliest was his translation of *The Romaunt of the Rose*, which is spoken of

in the Prologue to *The Legend of Good Women.* The extant translation, generally ascribed to Chaucer, is really three separate fragments, not all by one author, and possibly in no part at all the work of Chaucer. If any of it is his, the first fragment (ll. 1–1705) has the best claim. But whatever view may be taken of these problems, *The Romaunt of the Rose* is still to be considered the original of very much in Chaucer's own poetry, even in his later years when he had come under other powerful influences. *The Romaunt of the Rose* is a kind of encyclopedia of all the theory of chivalrous or courtly love as it was understood in the Middle Ages; it also contains, besides its doctrine, examples of all the most favoured methods of exposition and illustration in the school to which it belonged. Hence, in so far as Chaucer attached himself to the tradition of court poetry, he was obliged to pay respect to this book, and to regard it as a kind of authoritative treatise and a standard by which the ideas and the devices of his poetry were to be tested.

"Romaunt of the Rose."

The *Roman de la Rose* is the work of two authors. Guillaume de Lorris left it unfinished about the year 1230; Jean Clopinel of Meung-sur-Loire took it up about forty years later and continued it. This continuation is made up of a great variety of matters, many of them not agreeing at all well with the beginning. It is on account of this part of the work, and its satirical dispraise of women, that Chaucer incurs reproof in the vision at the beginning of his *Legend.* It is the first part, the work of Guillaume de Lorris (about four thousand lines), that most fully represents the spirit of medieval amatory poetry, as it came to be understood by Chaucer. The poem was written more than a hundred years after the conventions of chivalrous love-poetry were first established by the lyrical poets of Provence, from whom the lyrical poets of other countries—France, Germany and Italy—learned their manners of thinking and composing. It is not lyrical but narrative; an allegory of the vicissitudes of sentiment in a gentle lover. It closes one period in medieval poetry; the first period of courtly lyric poetry comes to an end in this didactic statement of all the ideas that had inspired the earlier poets of Provence, and their imitators. It also became a source of lyric poetry for later generations, in other schools, *e.g.* for the French poets of the fourteenth century, who were Chaucer's principal authorities at first, Machault, Deschamps, and Froissart. After Chaucer its influence is still to be traced for a long time in English poetry. All the Chaucerian poets made use of its commonplaces—the dream at the beginning, the May morning, the long descriptions of works of art, of sculpture or painting, the allegorical or mythological processions and pageants, the vague and dreamy sentiment, the language of devotion.

The French original.

Its influence on allegorical poetry.

This kind of poetry is not always easy to appreciate, but without reference to its origins in *The Romaunt of the Rose* it is hopelessly unintelligible.

"The Complaint to Pity."

The Complaint to Pity is one of Chaucer's early poems, written under the influence of the French school, or schools, of *The Romaunt of the Rose*, and of the fourteenth-century poets who followed the same tradition, with variations. It is written in a stanza common at the time in France—derived originally from Provence—the seven-line stanza, commonly called *rhyme royal*, but known at one time, from Chaucer's use of it, as *Troilus rhyme*. The *Complaint* is one of the best of Chaucer's poems in the old manner, when he was still content to repeat the old ideas and mode of expression, without any substantial addition from his own invention. Another poem of about the same time is *Chaucer's A B C*, a poem in honour of our Lady, with a verse for each letter, translated from the French of Guillaume de Deguileville. Besides, Chaucer is known, from the passage in the *Legend* already referred to, to have written three books now lost, *The Book of the Lion* (taken from Machault), *The Wretched Engendring of Mankind*, from Pope Innocent III, and *Origenes upon the Maudelayne*, a translation of a homily on St. Mary Magdalen ascribed to Origen.

"The Book of the Duchess" (1369–70).

In *The Book of the Duchess* (1369–70) Chaucer is still dependent, in the main, on his French models, but with some original improvements on their teaching. The poem is a court poem, an elegy for the death of a noble lady, with the praise of her beauty and excellence. It opens conventionally: the poet reads a book, and falls asleep, and dreams in harmony with his reading, and finds himself wandering, like the lover of the rose, in a fair forest over flowery meads. There he meets the black knight mourning for his lady, and the theme of the poem is then worked out. The defects of the poem are obvious; it is not well proportioned, it makes use of conventional devices that scarcely seem worth the room they occupy. But at the same time the truth of the sentiment in the fine passage in praise of the Lady Blanche is not impaired by the conventionalities of the poem; and even the conventionalities themselves are used in an original way.

Use of early writings in "The Canterbury Tales."

In putting together *The Canterbury Tales* Chaucer used some of his earlier writings. The Second Nun's Tale is the *Life of Saint Cecilia*, which is mentioned in the Prologue to *The Legend of Good Women*. This is written in the same stanza as the *Complaint*; it was included among *The Canterbury Tales* without revision. The Clerk's Tale, the story of *Griselda*, was probably written soon after the first Italian journey. The clerk is made to describe how he learned the story at Padua from Francis Petrarch, and, in fact, it is translated from

Petrarch's Latin version of Boccaccio's Italian story. The story of Constance (the Man of Law's Tale) was probably written about the same time. The Monk's Tale was plainly not composed expressly for *The Canterbury Tales*; it is an independent unfinished work on a favourite conventional theme, the "Falls of Princes," suggested to Chaucer by one of Boccaccio's systematic works in Latin prose, *De Casibus Virorum Illustrium*. The subject was taken up, after Chaucer, by Lydgate in his rhyming version of "Bochas," and still later by the authors of *The Mirror for Magistrates*. Chaucer's "tragedies," as he calls his stories of Lucifer, Samson, Hercules, and other mighty persons, are written in an eight-line stanza taken from the French, and already used by him in his translation of Deguileville's religious poem. The tragedies were probably not all written at the same time; one of them, the tragedy of "the Earl Hugelyn of Pise," is the most considerable of Chaucer's renderings from Dante (*Inferno*, xxxiii.), and one of the finest and most impressive of his shorter pieces.

The Complaint of Mars is the most artificial and conventional of all Chaucer's poems; a mythological allegory, full of learning, but without much interest, except in the skilful use of commonplaces, and of the poetical rhetoric of the French school.

Early narrative poems.

The early poems of Chaucer deal with many subjects. They are, however, limited in their range as compared with the later poems. Chaucer made no rash ventures in his early years. His experiments are all cautious and gradual. Thus his first narrative poems—*St. Cecilia*, *Griselda*, *Constance*—follow closely both the order of events and the sentiment of their originals. Chaucer must have known that the patience of Griselda was in danger of becoming monotonous; the story is one of those moral tales that insist on one particular virtue without any relief or qualification. He added to the story an ironical *Envoy* or epilogue, in which some allowance is made for other possible views of the question. He must have known also that the story of Constance, as he found it in his French original, was incoherent and faulty in construction. Yet he does not change the plan, does not cut out any of the unnecessary repetitions that spoil the structure of the tale. He accepts the awkward arrangement in this history, as he accepts the moral of the story of Griselda. His poetical genius shows itself in his style of translation, in the pathetic sentiment with which he invests his subject, and in additional illustrations. His Italian studies have not yet begun to affect the construction of his larger poems: their plan is prescribed for them by the plan of the original work which Chaucer happens to take up for translation. In details the Italian influence may be clearly observed. Thus the simile in the Man of Law's Tale—one of the most vivid in Chaucer—of the man led to execution, whose

face catches the eye among all the crowd round about him, is one of a kind that is not to be found in Chaucer's French poets, and is very frequent in the Italians :—

> "Have ye nat seyn som tyme a pale face,
> Among a prees, of him that hath be lad
> Toward his deeth, wher-as him gat no grace,
> And swich a colour in his face hath had,
> Men mighte knowe his face, that was bistad,
> Amonges alle the faces in that route:
> So stant Custance, and loketh hir aboute."

Possibly this and other passages may have been added to the poem when it was under revision for *The Canterbury Tales*.

§ 4. A change in Chaucer's views, an increase of poetical ambition, seems to be proved by his treatment of the story of *Palamon and Arcite*, his Knight's Tale. He found the story in Boccaccio's *Teseide*, an epic poem in twelve books, in which Theseus is a principal character, though not, as one might expect, the hero; and apparently made a translation of it in rhyme royal. This, too, is referred to in the Prologue to *The Legend of Good Women*. This earlier version has not been preserved; the Knight's Tale has supplanted it; but several stanzas from the *Teseide* are found incorporated in other poems, in *The Parliament of Fowls*, in *Anelida*, in *Troilus*; and the inference is that Chaucer was dissatisfied with his version, and used it to borrow from for the benefit of other works. In time the whole story was recast for the Knight's Tale. A comparison of the Knight's Tale with the Clerk's or Man of Law's gives the measure of the change in Chaucer's poetical ideals. In the beauty of single passages the Knight's Tale has no advantage over the others, but it is quite different in design and method. It does not follow closely the lines of the original; it is planned afresh from the beginning. The matter of the story is presented in the fittest possible way. This regard for proportion and harmony is evidence of Chaucer's later manner of working, though it cannot be found in equal degrees in all his later writings. It was probably learned from a study of the Italian poets, and especially from Boccaccio, on whom Chaucer spent more time than on any other author. If it is desirable to make an "Italian period" in Chaucer's biography, that period should begin, not with the first traces of his Italian reading, but with the first, which is also the finest, result of the Italian lessons in construction, the poem of *Troilus and Criseyde*, founded on the *Filostrato* of Boccaccio.

Increase of scope of Chaucer's art: growth of Italian influence.

Before *Troilus* comes a poem of great interest in relation to Chaucer's progress as an author—a fragment in which he introduced stanzas from the *Teseide*—*Anelida and the False Arcite*. Chaucer's intention in this poem is not quite clear, but the fragment, as it stands, shows that he was making experiments, with some amount of hesitation and

'Anelida.'

uncertainty. The plot of the poem is of a sort that was in great favour with Chaucer's French poets, a simple problem in a sentimental history, a gentle lady, a faithless lover. The pathos of the story is brought out in an elaborate lyrical composition, *The Complaint of Anelida the Queen*, which is Chaucer's masterpiece in that kind of poetry. There is a great contrast in the poem between the finished and delicate composition of this dramatic lyric and the awkwardness of the introductory part; passages of heavy epic description from the *Teseide* make a very incongruous prelude to the most elegant, the least substantial, of all Chaucer's works. *Anelida* shows the French and the Italian manners brought together in contrast, and unreconciled; and the poem was doubtless abandoned as impossible when the subject of *Troilus* and the opening for new methods presented themselves to the author.

"*Troilus and Criseyde.*"

The story of *Troilus and Criseyde* is sentimental, like that of *Anelida*: the theme again is that of true and untrue love. The character of the poem is wholly different, and this is due in great part to Boccaccio's *Filostrato*. This, which Chaucer had before him, is well designed as a poetical narrative. The *Teseide*, which gave Chaucer so much trouble, is less successful, being an attempt to combine a sentimental story with the forms of classical epic poetry, to the detriment of both. In the *Filostrato* Chaucer had a model that enabled him to avoid the discrepancies of the *Teseide*, and of his own *Anelida*. He did not in this case follow his model too closely, and by his own additions to the original produced a new work which is at once his longest poem and in some respects his greatest. The outline of the story he found in Boccaccio, and a large part of his *Troilus* is translated from the Italian. What is not found in the Italian is the new conception of the characters, and especially of the comic character of Pandarus. In Boccaccio the characters are clearly defined but not very elaborate. In Chaucer's *Troilus* the characters are treated much more dramatically and with stronger contrasts between them. The harmony of tragedy and comedy in the poem is the work of Chaucer himself, and where he shows himself most capable of appreciating his Italian author he is also most original. The humour of the poem is the same as that of *The Canterbury Tales*, while it is employed in a more difficult and complex kind of work.

The story of Troilus is first found in the French *Roman de Troie*, a romance of the twelfth century on the whole history of the Trojan war, with the story of the Argonauts as part of the introductory matter. In the thirteenth century this was translated into Latin prose, the *Historia Trojana* of Guido delle Colonne. This was the foundation of Boccaccio's work. Chaucer, besides the *Filostrato*, made use of the older versions

as well. Guido is referred to more than once by name in other parts of his writings.

Chaucer seems to have worked hardest when he was busiest in other respects. His poems only partly represent his various studies. Before *Troilus* was completed he had translated into English one of his favourite Latin books, the *Consolation of Philosophy* of Boëthius, and probably other serious works as well. The prose tale of *Melibeus*, which Chaucer repeats in his own person among the Canterbury Pilgrims, and the sermon which he afterwards ascribed to the Parson, both of them translated or adapted works, are among the results of that same devotion to edifying literature which led him to translate Pope Innocent, and, later, to compile the treatise on the Astrolabe for the use of his son.

Excursions in serious literature.

The Parliament of Fowls is one of the most original among Chaucer's minor poems. It was written in honour of the marriage of King Richard II with Anne of Bohemia, probably while Chaucer was still engaged upon his *Troilus*, and displays some of the qualities of the longer poem. It returns, it is true, to the earlier French devices, but there is a great difference between the allegorical dream in this form and that of *The Book of the Duchess* thirteen years before. Here the design is firm, the poetical expression is full and strong, and not a little of the humour of the *Troilus* enlivens the conventional allegory. The proverbial philosophy and wise reflections of the birds in their debate are evidently from the school of Pandarus.

"The Parliament of Fowls" (1382).

Troilus was followed by *The House of Fame*. Chaucer speaks of *Troilus* in the *Envoy* as a "tragedy," and prays for power to write something in "comedy" before he dies. In *The House of Fame* he appears to have sought contrast and relief to his greater poem. Like many of his pieces, it is unfinished, and it is not very easy to make out the upshot of it all. It is full of mock-heroic reminiscences of Dante, and it may be the book referred to by Lydgate as Chaucer's "Dant in English." The chief object, however, appears to have been indulgence in a number of literary tastes that had to be repressed in *Troilus*. In many things it is a return to an earlier manner. *The Romaunt of the Rose* again asserts its authority. The temples of allegory, the descriptions of pictured walls, the digressions on points of science, the moralising, the commonplaces, are all proper to the French school. Probably Chaucer had some personal references in his mind (like those of Pope in *The Rape of the Lock*), but they were not worked out. *The House of Fame*, coming after *Troilus*, looks like a holiday excursion into regions where Chaucer had long been at home, and where he could take his ease. He had done enough to satisfy his poetical conscience by his absorbing attention to the noblest kind of poetry within his reach, in *Troilus and Criseyde*.

"The House of Fame" (1383–4).

The Legend of Good Women was probably begun in 1384. This also is unfinished. After the diversion of *The House of Fame* Chaucer appears to have set himself to compose another large and comprehensive work—not, this time, a single story, but a series brought into unity by means of an introduction, like Boccaccio's *Decamerone*, or the still older medieval collections, such as the *Seven Wise Masters of Rome* and other "cabinets of stories." brought first to Europe from the East. *The Legend of Good Women*, or the "Saints' Legends of Cupid," as it is called in the Man of Law's Prologue, is a series of stories to illustrate the truth of women, and thereby to make amends for the wrong done to them in other works, especially in the latter part of the *Rose* (Jehan de Meung's part, included in Chaucer's version, according to his own account), and in *Troilus and Criseyde.* There were to have been twenty stories, but only nine were completed :—Cleopatra, Thisbe, Dido, Hypsipyle and Medea, Lucretia, Ariadne, Philomela, Phyllis, Hypermnestra. The principal authorities are Ovid and two of the Latin works of Boccaccio—*De Claris Mulieribus* and *De Genealogia Deorum.* The Prologue is still another variation of the old French commonplace, and another proof how little Chaucer was hindered in his poetical style by these conventions. The allegorical pageant here is made to serve a definite poetical conception : it becomes a kind of new mythology, full of meaning. The Queen Alcestis is something more than a shadow, and in place of the old courtly idealism, which was mainly a matter of phrases, there is the idealism of moral and imaginative insight into character. In this Chaucer had never been wanting : *The Book of the Duchess* is enough to prove it. But *The Book of the Duchess*, with all its grace, had been lacking in poetical weight and dignity. The stately couplets of the *Legend* make up for this, and the Prologue remains the chief English memorial of that chivalrous reverence which has produced so many futile extravagances and so much of the noblest modern poetry. The Prologue contains the best of Chaucer's lyrical poems, the ballad—

"The Legend of Good Women."

"Hyd, Absolon, thy gilte tresses clere,"

and also (a commonplace of the French school) the allegory of the Flower and the Leaf, taken up by one of the best of the Chaucerian poems in a later age.

§ 5. *The Legend of Good Women* was probably left unfinished because the stories were too much alike in tone. Whatever the reason, he took care that there should be no monotony in his next great enterprise. The life and variety of *The Canterbury Tales* have made it hopeless for any critic to praise them sufficiently. Dryden (in his preface to the *Fables*) has given the best account of

"The Canterbury Tales":

them, when, after some sentences describing the humours of the pilgrims, he concludes : "But enough of this ; there is such a variety of game springing up before me that I am distracted in my choice, and know not which to follow. It is sufficient to say, according to the proverb, that *here is God's plenty*."

their Prologue and its personages.

The Prologue to *The Canterbury Tales* has been recognised by critics of all schools, in spite of all the changes of taste and fashion since it was written, as a piece of writing completely successful in all its aims. It is not Chaucer's greatest work, but it is the most perfect.

The Canterbury Pilgrims represent the whole of English society. The Knight is a gentleman of the old school—the history of his life, spent in fighting against the Moors in Spain, the heathen in Prussia, and in many other expeditions, is evidence that Don Quixote was not more than two hundred years too late in his practice of knight-errantry. The Squire, his son, represents another kind of chivalry, the more luxurious and less idealist temper of the age of the great French war. The Yeoman, their servant, is a forester, with a pride in his bow and arrows. Next in the description comes the Prioress, Madame Eglentyne, with a Nun and three Priests ; then a Monk. The Prioress and the Monk are of the same rank, apparently, as the Knight and Squire, gentlefolk living in religion, but not forgetting the graces of worldly society. The Friar is of a different cast, and more at home in taverns and cottages than in "bower and hall." The Merchant (in trade with the Low Countries) is not specially interesting to Chaucer. The Clerk of Oxford has more of his sympathy ; a poor scholar devoted to learning, simple-minded and unselfish. The Man of Law comes next, a Serjeant :—

> "No-wher so bisy a man as he ther nas,
> And yet he semed bisier than he was."

The Franklin is described with great gusto ; a country gentleman and member of Parliament, fond of good living :—

> "It snewed in his hous of mete and drinke."

Some members of City Companies, a Haberdasher, a Carpenter, a Weaver, a Dyer, and a Tapiser are described together in general terms ; they are undistinguished. The Cook is more interesting. The Shipman is one of the best of all the portraits :—

> "With many a tempest hadde his berd been shake."

He was captain of the "Maudelayne," of Dartmouth, and he knew all the harbours "from Gothland to the Cape of Finisterre." The Doctor of Physic, like some other of the more respectable pilgrims, is rather indefinite. The Wife of Bath,

besides her portrait in the Prologue, is allowed to describe herself, later, in a prologue of her own. The Parson's character is Chaucer's ideal of a good priest; of the Ploughman, his brother, there is a companion portrait, the honest workman. The Reeve, the Miller, the Manciple, the Sumner, with the Pardoner, make up the number of the pilgrims found by Chaucer at the Tabard in Southwark. These latter personages are not carelessly passed over; they are the less gentle part of the company, but they are not all alike; the Pardoner, like the Wife of Bath, has an opportunity of telling all about himself before he begins his tale.

It was the host of the Tabard, Harry Baily, who proposed that they should tell stories by the way, he himself coming with them as "judge and reporter." Each man was to tell two stories on the way out, and two more on the way home, and the best teller of stories was to be entertained at supper by the other pilgrims when they all came back to the Tabard.

The Canterbury Tales are unfinished. No pilgrim tells more than one story (except Chaucer, whose first attempt, *Sir Thopas*, is disallowed by the host), though a new companion, the Canon's Yeoman, who joins them on the last day of the outward journey, is permitted to tell his tale against the alchemists.

General scheme and classification of the work.

The plan required interludes between one story and another: in these, of course, the pilgrims discourse in their own character, and one story-teller is dismissed and another is called upon to begin. But there are parts of the Tales without any such interlude, and some of the Tales are not brought into connection with the rest. On examination it has been found that the following groups have been left. The arrangement, due to Dr. Furnivall, is adopted by the Chaucer Society, by Dr. Skeat, in his edition of Chaucer, and generally for purposes of reference :—

First Day.—*Group A:* Prologue; Knight, Miller, Reeve, Cook.
Second Day.—*Group B:* Man of Law, Shipman, Prioress, Chaucer (*Sir Thopas: Melibeus*), Monk, Nun's Priest.
Third Day.—*Group C:* Physician, Pardoner. *Group D:* Wife of Bath, Friar, Sumner. *Group E:* Clerk, Merchant.
Fourth Day.—*Group F:* Squire, Franklin. *Group G:* Second Nun, Canon's Yeoman. *Group H:* Manciple. *Group I:* Parson.

"The Canterbury Tales"; a résumé of Chaucer's work of all kinds and periods.

The Tales were not all written for their tellers; on the contrary, Chaucer appears to have made use of his earlier work, sometimes without much revision. Thus the Second Nun's Tale, the Man of Law's Tale, and the Monk's, have been already mentioned, and the Knight's Tale is apparently a new version of a poem on which Chaucer had spent much time before he thought of the pilgrimage. The Tales as a whole do not, like *Troilus and Criseyde*, *The House of Fame*, or *The Legend of Good Women*, represent

one particular stage of his work, or one definite experiment; they contain almost every kind of subject, and most of the various manners of treatment employed by Chaucer. They represent most of the varied kinds of story in fashion in the Middle Ages. The Knight's Tale is a romance of adventures, including one of the sentimental problems that were in favour in a certain order of romances. The Squire's Tale (left half told) contains a similar problem, with a different setting—among the marvels of the East, such as were to be revived again when the *Arabian Nights* were translated three centuries after Chaucer. The Wife of Bath's Tale is a fairy story of a kind well known in the old French *lais*, derived from Welsh or Breton fables; while the Breton *lais* (whatever may have been meant by the name) are expressly referred to as sources of the Franklin's Tale. The story of Constance is a familiar story in all popular tradition—the persecuted, innocent wife, the calumnious mother-in-law, with poetical justice to bring all things right in the end. These are romances; but romances were not the only kind of fiction available. The ribald stories of the French Fabliaux are represented by the Reeve and the Miller, and by other of the more churlish pilgrims. A less rudimentary kind of humour was to be found in some of the comic stories of the cycle of Reynard the Fox, from which Chaucer has drawn the material for the most pleasant of his lighter pieces, the tale of the Cock and the Fox, the Nun's Priest's Tale. The Pardoner, like the Wife of Bath, after a monologue in which he utters all his naughtiness, is permitted to change his tone, and gives a moral apologue "of the three knaves who went to look for Death." The Doctor of Physic tells the story of Virginia in the grave pathetic manner of *The Legend of Good Women*. The Prioress tells of the boy martyr put to death by the Jews like Hugh of Lincoln. The Cook begins a story of an idle apprentice, which would have competed with the rogues' romances of Nash or Defoe; the loss of it is, in part, made up by the thorough analytical study of the alchemist (not the sorcerer of romance) in the Canon's Yeoman's Tale. Chaucer's *Rime of Sir Thopas* is his parody of an old-fashioned kind of poetry, which he appreciated perhaps more highly than he would have us believe. The Parson's Tale and the Tale of *Melibeus*—"a litel thing in prose"—which is substituted as Chaucer's story when his *Sir Thopas* is stopped by the host, are specimens of the moralist, one good, the other extremely trying, both equally characteristic of medieval taste. Chaucer, to the end, retained his ordinary sensible views of the advantages of sound education. However far he may have ventured beyond the range of the average man of his day, he was always ready to come back; and for the sake of education and the diffusion of knowledge, he translated his "Boece" and his *Melibeus*, and compiled his *Treatise on the Astrolabe* and his Parson's Tale.

§ 6. While engaged in his greater works Chaucer wrote several short poems, many of them very pleasant, such as the address to his secretary Adam—an epigram on the careless transcriber of his poems—and the ballad to *Rosamond*, an ironically graceful version of courtly sentiment. More than one of his later poems refer to his own distresses, in a tone not infrequently repeated by the greatest of Chaucer's followers, Dunbar. The ballads of *Fortune*, the *Complaint to the Empty Purse*, and the *Envoys* to Scogan and Bukton, belong to the unfortunate years. *The Complaint of Venus*, as already noted, is a translation from the French of Granson, and a return to the early manner, showing how Chaucer refused to break with his old masters, even when he had learned the imperfection of their ways of thinking. The *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, written for Lewis, his son, about 1391, is another proof of Chaucer's versatility, and of the strength of his attachment to all the subjects which he had once been led to study.

Shorter poems and ballads.

§ 7. Chaucer represents the Middle Ages by giving form in English to medieval subjects that had not before his time been displayed to advantage in this country. He represents the Renaissance through his understanding of the Italian poets, and his adoption of their classical principles in all his finest poems. That he was a critic and a student of literature is as evident as that he did not always stick at critical scruples. His mastery of style is only partly derived from the Italians. No English poet has borrowed more than the "great translator," none with more originality and independence. It was his own genius that taught him to fill up the outline of the "tragedy" of Troilus, and to reduce the encumbrances of ornament which Boccaccio had given to Palamon and Arcite; he had no master in the ironical comedy of *The Canterbury Tales*. In the monologues of the Wife of Bath, the Pardoner, and the Canon's Yeoman, he anticipates a form of poetry which is more familiar to modern readers in Tennyson and Browning than in any earlier author. If not the best of Chaucer's poetry, it is this kind which is most distinctly original and most different from that of his contemporaries; it is a kind which is only possible to an author of perfect balance and judgment; the ironical view that it implies is something quite distinct from any of the common literary forms of the Middle Ages, and is used by Chaucer in his own way. The balance of faculties to be observed in Chaucer's best works is something quite different from the "classical" correctness that might be learned in schools of literature. It is his genius, though it is aided by study, and by many experiments and some failures.

Originality of Chaucer's genius: its relation to the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

In the age of Chaucer there seems to have been a perfect agreement and understanding between the poets and their

audience: the good manners and good temper of the readers bringing out the qualities of the poet. The courtly qualities of Chaucer, without his genius, are to be found in Gower. In the next generation there was a change. Somehow or other the fine manners of the time of Edward III and Richard II were lost, and for nearly two centuries there was a decline in literature. When poetry revived in the Elizabethan age, it was found that all the rudiments had to be learned over again, and with all their genius none of the great poets of that time were fortunate enough to recover Chaucer's secret, the perfect accommodation of his work at once to his own standard of excellence and to the intelligence and sympathies of those for whom he wrote.

Decline of literature after Chaucer.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

A.—THE PREDECESSORS OF GOWER AND CHAUCER.

By the middle of the fourteenth century the spirit of patriotism evoked by Edward III combined with the influence of the continental Renaissance to produce a flourishing national literature. Its chief product, as in most similar cases, was poetry; but the earliest works in prose that can be properly called English belong to the same date. In 1356 Mandeville dedicated his *Travels* to Edward III; in 1362 Parliament was first opened by a speech in English; Chaucer had begun to write, and Gower had exchanged the French and Latin of his earlier works for his mother tongue. The meeting of different influences which has been referred to in the text may be illustrated by the fact that the last great hero of chivalry, the Black Prince, and Ockham (see p. 29), the last and greatest of the English Schoolmen, lived in the same century with Chaucer, the father of English poetry, and Wycliffe, the herald of the Reformation. The new literature may be distinguished from the literature of the two preceding centuries of transition (although it is difficult to draw any precise line of demarcation) by its substance as well as its form. While the language has become so like modern English that it can be read with tolerable ease, by pronouncing syllables which are now mute, by allowing for the retention of some inflectional forms, especially in the pronouns and the verbs, and by taking the trouble to learn the meaning of a few words now obsolete; the subjects are, at the same time, no longer borrowed entirely from the monastic chroniclers or the Norman minstrels; and those so borrowed are treated with the independence of native genius. These characteristics are first fully seen in Chaucer, and, in a less degree, in Gower, whose genius was, of course, far less commanding than Chaucer's; but these two had several precursors in England, while a vigorous native literature grew up in the Anglo-Saxon parts of Scotland. ADAM DAVIE (fl. *circ.* 1308) and RICHARD ROLLE, the hermit of Hampole, near Doncaster (1290?–1349), both writers of metrical paraphrases of Scripture, and of other religious pieces, belong properly to the Old English period. Davie is the only English poet named in the reign of Edward II; but his real date and identity are disputed. Rolle also wrote, in the Northumbrian dialect, a homiletic poem called *The Prick of Conscience*, in seven books, and nearly ten thousand lines. The first poet of any merit known to us by

name is LAURENCE MINOT (1300?–1352), who wrote between 1333 and 1352. His poems were discovered by Tyrwhitt in 1775, and printed by Ritson in 1796 (reprinted 1825) with an introduction on the wars of Edward III. They celebrate ten victories of the king in his wars with France and Scotland, but begin with his defeat at Halidon Hill (1333), and then, after going back, by way of effective contrast, to Bannockburn, proceed with Edward's French victories and his vengeance on Scotland at Neville's Cross (1346). The last lay, the taking of Guisnes (1352), gives an approximate date for the author, who may, of course, have written the other poems soon after the events commemorated. Equal in spirit to the best of our heroic ballads, they have more sustained power and their composition is more finished. Their language is a border dialect, nearly akin to the Scotch; it is quite intelligible when a few obsolete words and constructions have been mastered. Among their varied measures we meet with the animated double triplet, familiar in the poems of Scott. In Minot's poems rhyme is regularly employed, while the frequent alliterations not only remind us of the principle of Anglo-Saxon composition, but prove how much the popular ear still required that artifice.

There is another famous poem of the same age, constructed of a mixture of alliteration and rhythmical accent, without rhyme, the alliteration being stricter than that of the Anglo-Saxons themselves. This is *The Vision of Piers the Plowman*, or, rather, *The Vision of William concerning Piers* (*i.e. Peter*) *the Plowman*, an allegory of the difficulties in the course of human life, kindred in conception to Bunyan's great work, and in its day scarcely less popular. Its prevalent spirit is satirical and is directed against abuses and vices in general, but, in particular, against the corruptions of the Church. From a moral (not, of course, doctrinal) point of view it approximates to the standpoint of the later Puritans, with whom it was a great favourite. Its final cast consists of nearly 8000 long lines (or couplets) in twenty-three "*passus*," or sections. Its first part is devoted to the *Vision*; the second (and longer) part to a sequel, entitled the *Vita de Do-Wel, Do-Bet, and Do-Best*. Each couplet has two principal accents, with considerable licence as to the number of syllables. The alliteration falls on three accented syllables in each couplet, namely, on both those of the first line, and on the first in the second line (sometimes on the second). As these peculiarities can only be understood by an example, we give the opening of the poem, which also shows us the scene of the vision, among the Malvern Hills—not far, it is interesting to note, from the village where Layamon had lived and written. The orthography is taken from the "B" text of the poem in the Early English Text Society's edition (ed. Dr. Skeat, 1869):—

"In a somer seson
Whan soft was the sonne,
I shope me in shroudes *
As I a shepe were,†
In habite as an heremite
Unholy of workes,‡
Went wyde in this world
Wondres to here.
Ac§ on a May mornynge
On Maluerne hulles‖
Me byfel a ferly ¶
Of fairy me thoughte."

* Put on rough clothes.
† As if I were a shepherd.
‡ Dressed like a wandering hermit doing no good.
§ But. ‖ Hills. ¶ Wonder.

This opening probably marks the early residence of the poet. The third couplet, with other internal evidence, points to his having been a priest. The date of the first cast of this poem is fixed by his allusions to the treaty of Bretigny (1360) and to the great tempest of January 15, 1362, of which he speaks as a recent event. Tradition ascribes the work to a certain ROBERT LANGLAND; but the writer says that he was called "Longe Wille," and it may be reasonably concluded from this that his Christian name was William. He often alludes to his poverty: he seems to have lived in London and in Bristol. His acquaintance with eccle-

siastical literature agrees with the supposition that he was a Churchman; and he was evidently familiar with the Latin poems ascribed to Walter Map. The great interest of his work is its unquestionable reflection of the popular sentiment of his age. Langland is as intensely national as Chaucer; but, while his great successor in the art of poetry freely availed himself of the forms introduced in Anglo-Norman literature, Langland makes a last attempt to revive the Anglo-Saxon forms. This effort, combined with his rich humour and unsparing satire, gained him unbounded popularity with the common people. The author recast his poem twice, so that we have three versions of it. The first and shortest, or *A* text, is of the date of 1362; the second, or *B* text, the best of the three, and more than double the length of *A*, may be dated 1377; the third, or *C* text, about 1380. The author's other work, *Richard the Redeless*, directed against Richard II, is left unfinished. Professor Skeat has edited for the Clarendon Press a parallel edition of the three texts, to which *Richard the Redeless* is appended.

Langland had numerous imitators. *The Creed of Piers Plowman*, a work of the same school, and often ascribed to the same author, is supposed to have been written about twenty or thirty years later than the *Vision*. It is more serious in its tone, and more in harmony with the religious attitude of Wycliffe. *The Complaint of Piers Plowman* is to be found in a volume of political and satirical songs in the Rolls Series. These political poems concur with Gower's *Vox Clamantis* in giving us a vivid impression of the evils which provoked the great Lancastrian revolution.

English Prose Literature was formerly said to begin with SIR JOHN MANDEVILLE, who is said to have been born at St. Albans about 1300, and to have left England for the East in 1322. Mr. E. B. Nicholson, however, in the article written by himself and Sir H. Yule for the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, states that a comparison of all the best MSS. decides that the English version of Mandeville's travels was unquestionably the work of a translator. He gives reasons for doubting whether Mandeville was a real person at all, and for believing that the book was originally written in French, under a feigned name, by the physician Jean de Bourgogne, who, in an early edition, is said to have met Mandeville, first at Cairo, and again at Liége. The book professes to be a record of Mandeville's travels in Palestine, Egypt, Persia, Tartary, India, and China. But Sir H. Yule shows that, excepting perhaps the part about Egypt and the Levant generally, the travels were a mere adaptation of previous works, and that the author had never visited the distant countries which he describes. The work, in its English dress, is now chiefly interesting as probably the earliest example, on a large scale, of English prose. The English of Mandeville's translator is straightforward and unadorned, and probably a fair example of the spoken English of the day. As compared with Robert of Gloucester, it shows a great increase of French words. No work of the age was more popular. It exists in a large number of MSS. The earliest printed edition in English is that of Wynkyn de Worde (Westminster, 1499; 8vo); but an Italian translation by Pietro di Cornero had been previously (1480) printed in quarto form at Milan. There was an even earlier German edition, and there is record of a Dutch version as early as 1470. The standard English edition is that printed at London (1725; 8vo), and reprinted, with an Introduction, Notes, and Glossary, by Mr. Halliwell (London, 1839; 8vo).

The translation of the Latin *Polychronicon* of Ranulf Higden (see p. 30) by JOHN DE TREVISA (1326–1412), vicar of Berkeley, was completed in 1385, and is chiefly interesting as having been printed in 1482 by Caxton. It also has been printed in the Rolls Series. It is a curious proof of the change which a single century made in the language, that Caxton thought it necessary "somewhat to change *the rude and*

old English, that is, to wit, certain words which in these days be neither used or understood." Several other translations, made by Trevisa from the Latin, exist only in MS.

The great Scottish poet of this age, JOHN BARBOUR, Archdeacon of Aberdeen (*circ.* 1316–1395), was a contemporary rather than a precursor of Chaucer, with whom he deserves to be classed as the father of a national literature. His *Bruce* (1375), in 13,000 rhymed octosyllabic lines, is a chronicle of the adventures of King Robert I, and is of very high merit. The Lowland Scottish dialect was formed under exactly the same influences as the English, from which it differed rather less than in the present day. Barbour also paid several visits to England, and studied at Oxford in his mature age. He wrote a *Troy Book*, of which we have parts in MS., and a long collection of *Lives of Saints*, in a Cambridge MS. which has been printed at Heilbronn. Before this time there are hardly any names in Scottish literature, except that of the Schoolman, MICHAEL SCOT (1175?–1234?), who studied abroad, and was scarcely known at home, except by his reputation as a wizard, which was probably due to his Latin translation of Aristotle's work on the Soul, compiled from an Arabian source. THOMAS RYMOUR or LEARMONT (1220?–1297?), of Erceldoune, known as True Thomas, or Thomas the Rhymer, had a great reputation for his prophecies, and was erroneously supposed to have been the author of the romance of *Tristan*. Another Scottish author was the Latin chronicler, JOHN OF FORDUN (d. 1384?), a chantry-priest of Aberdeen, whose *Scotichronicon* contains the legendary and historical annals of his country to the death of David I (1153). The younger and less celebrated contemporary of Barbour, ANDREW WYNTOUN (*circ.* 1350—after 1420), canon of St. Andrews, and prior of St. Serf in Lochleven, wrote a metrical chronicle, in nine books, of Scottish and general history. BLIND HARRY THE MINSTREL belongs to the following century.

B.—JOHN GOWER.

The transition which occurred in our language and literature about the middle of the fourteenth century cannot be illustrated better than by the writings of John Gower, the contemporary and friend of Chaucer, and the author of three great poetical works, the first in French, the second in Latin, and the third in English. Gower is assumed to have been somewhat older than Chaucer, as the old writers generally name him first: he survived Chaucer by eight years, dying in 1408. But the precedence must be awarded to Chaucer, not only for the vast superiority of his genius, but as the first writer in English. It may be questioned whether Gower would have written in English at all, unless in conformity with the taste created by Chaucer. Their early friendship is proved by Chaucer's dedication of *Troilus and Criseyde* to Gower, by a title which became the second poet's fixed epithet:—

> "O moral Gower! this book I directe
> To thee, and to the philosophical Strode,
> To vouchen sauf, ther nede is, to corecte,
> Of your benignitees and zeles gode."

And the continuance of their friendship (in spite of conjectures founded on insufficient evidence) is attested by the compliment paid to Chaucer in Gower's *Confessio Amantis* (finished 1393), where Venus greets Chaucer

> "As my disciple and my poete,"

and, after speaking of "the dittees and songes glad" composed "in the floures of his youthe" for her sake—songs of which

> "The land fulfilled is over all"

—exhorts him to employ his old age in writing his *Testament of Love*.

Two of the Canterbury Tales, those of the Man of Law and the Wife of Bath, were no doubt derived by both Gower and his great contemporary from a common source.

Caxton made Gower a native of

the peninsula of Gower in South Wales, and Leland claimed him as a member of the family of Gower of Stittenham in Yorkshire, from which are sprung the noble houses of Sutherland and Ellesmere. But Sir Harris Nicolas and others have proved, from existing deeds, and from the comparison of seals with the arms on Gower's tomb, that the poet was an esquire of Kent, and probably of the same family as Sir Robert Gower of Moulton and Kentwell in Suffolk, who died in or before 1349. Sir Robert's daughter and co-heiress Joan conveyed the manor of Kentwell to John Gower (the poet) on June 28, 1368. From this and similar evidence it appears that Gower was sprung from a family of knightly rank, and that he possessed estates in Kent, Norfolk, Suffolk, and probably in Essex, although he lived much in London, and apparently in close connection with the Court. There is no ground for the common statement that he followed the legal profession; but it appears (very doubtfully) that he took Holy Orders and held the living of Great Braxted in Essex. In 1397 he married one Agnes Groundolf; this was late in life, for in 1400 he speaks of himself as both old and blind. His will still exists, made on August 15, 1408, and proved by his widow on the 24th of October following. The evidence of his marriage comes from the register of William of Wykeham, preserved at Winchester; it took place at St. Mary Magdalen's, Southwark, on January 28, 1397. The identity of the parties is rendered almost certain by the identity of names. His will leaves it doubtful whether he had issue. He lies buried, according to his own directions, in St. Mary Overies, now the Collegiate Church of St. Saviour, Southwark, of which he was a great benefactor. His splendid canopied tomb bears his arms and effigy; his head rests on his three volumes, and the wall within the three arches is painted with figures of Charity, Mercy, and Pity. The story of his having been a fellow-student with Chaucer, either at Oxford or Cambridge, is as unfounded as most of Leland's other statements about him, but his works furnish proof of his having received the best education which his age could bestow, and of his command of the languages then in use.

Gower's three great works were the *Speculum Meditantis*, in French; the *Vox Clamantis*, in Latin; and the *Confessio Amantis* in English.

(1.) The *Speculum Meditantis* is now entirely lost, and the short French poem which Warton describes under that name is an entirely different work. It seems to have been a collection of precepts on chastity, reinforced by examples. But there are still extant *Fifty French Ballads* by Gower, in a MS. now belonging to the Earl of Ellesmere, and edited for the Roxburghe Club (1818) by the Marquess of Stafford. "They are," says Pauli in the Introductory Essay to his edition of Gower, "tender in sentiment, and not unrefined with regard to language and form, especially if we consider that they are the work of a foreigner. They treat of love in the manner introduced by the Provençal poets, which was afterwards generally adopted by those in the north of France." They were about the last works of any importance written in the Anglo-Norman French, which was now so fully regarded as a foreign language that Gower apologises for his French, saying, "I am English," while he gives as his reason for using the language, that he was addressing his ballads—

"Al Université de tout le monde."

Some verses addressed to Henry IV after his accession prove that Gower continued to write in French to the end of his life.

(2.) Of Gower's great Latin poem, the *Vox Clamantis*, Dr. Pauli gives the following account:—

"Soon after the rebellion of the Commons in 1381 [under Richard II], an event which made a great impression on his mind, Gower wrote that singular work in Latin distichs, called *Vox Clamantis*, of which we possess an excellent edition by the Rev. H. O. Coxe, printed for the Rox-

burghe Club in 1850. The name, with an allusion to St. John the Baptist, seems to have been adopted from the general clamour and cry then abroad in the country. The greater bulk of the work, the date of which its editor is inclined to fix between 1382 and 1384, is a moral rather than a historical essay; but the first book describes the insurrection of Wat Tyler in an allegorical disguise—the poet pretending to have a dream on June 11, 1381, in which men assume the shape of animals. The second book contains a long sermon on fatalism, in which the poet shows himself no friend to Wycliffe's tenets, but a zealous advocate of clerical reformation. The third book points out how all orders of society must suffer for their own vices and demerits. The fourth book is dedicated to the cloistered clergy and the friars; the fifth to the military; the sixth contains a violent attack on the lawyers; and the seventh subjoins the moral of the whole, as represented in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, interpreted by Daniel. There are also some smaller Latin poems in leonine hexameters; among them one addressed to Henry IV, in which the poet laments his own blindness."

(3.) Gower's latest poem, the *Confessio Amantis*, was written in English, with a running marginal commentary in Latin, not unlike the commentary which accompanies Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*. Its composition seems to be due to the success of Chaucer. We again quote from Dr. Pauli:—"The exact date of the poem has not been ascertained, but there is internal evidence, in certain copies, that it existed in the year 1392–3. As this point involves a question of grave importance with respect to the author's behaviour and position in the political events of the day, it will be necessary to enter more fully into the subject. He unquestionably issued two editions of the work, which . . . vary from each other only at the commencement and at the end; the one being dedicated to King Richard II, the other to his cousin, Henry of Lancaster, Earl of Derby. In the king's copy the poet describes at length how he came rowing down the Thames at London one day, and how he met King Richard, who, having invited him to step into the royal barge, commanded him to write upon some new matter. In that addressed to Henry, he says that the book was finished *the yere sixteenth of King Richard* (1392–93), an important fact which has been hitherto overlooked by all writers on the subject, including even Sir. H. Nicolas (*Life of Chaucer*, p. 39), who states that Gower did not dedicate his work to Henry until he had ascended the throne." Having shown that the dedication was made when Henry was not yet king, or even Duke of Lancaster, but Earl of Derby—a title which he bore in 1392–3—Pauli proceeds:—"The one version abounds in expressions of the deepest loyalty towards his sovereign, for whose sake he intends to write *some newe thing* in English; the other mentions the year of the reign of Richard II, is full of attachment to Henry of Lancaster—

'With whom my herte is of accorde'

—and purports to appear in English for England's sake." The inference from all this is that Gower, seeing the fatal tendency of Richard's course, early attached himself to Henry of Lancaster, from whom—the record is still extant—he received a collar in 1394, probably in acknowledgment of the dedication of his poem. He also, in his minor pieces, addresses Henry more than once with affection and respect. Hence the beginning of the *Confessio Amantis* would fall before 1386, when Richard came of age and began his arbitrary government. Hence, also, the omission of the compliment to Chaucer at the end of the poem, in the edition inscribed to Henry, may be explained by motives of policy, without inferring any personal alienation. Chaucer, however, did not take the omission kindly, and in the Man of Law's Tale and its prologue, inserted reflections on Gower's accuracy and morality.

The Prologue to the *Confessio* is in that strain of dissatisfaction with the existing order of things which pervades the *Vox Clamantis*; and the poet comforts himself with the same resource, the divine government of the world, as revealed in Nebuchadnezzar's vision. Yet how little he shares the opinions of Wycliffe is proved by his reference to

"This new secte of lollardie."

Pauli gives the following outline of the work:—"The poem opens by introducing the author himself, in the character of an unhappy lover in despair, smitten by Cupid's arrow. Venus appears to him, and, after having heard his prayer, appoints her priest called Genius, like the mystagogue in the *Picture* of Cebes, to hear the lover's confession. This is the frame of the whole work, which is a singular mixture of classical notions, principally borrowed from Ovid's *Ars Amandi*, and of the purely medieval idea that, as a good Catholic, the unfortunate lover must state his distress to a father confessor. This is done, in the course of the confession, with great regularity and even pedantry; all the passions of the human heart which generally stand in the way of love being systematically arranged in the various books and subdivisions of the work. After Genius has fully explained the evil affection, passion, or vice under consideration, the lover confesses on that particular point, and frequently urges his love for an unknown beauty, who treats him cruelly, in a tone of affectation which would appear highly ridiculous in a man of more than sixty years of age, were it not a common characteristic of the poetry of the period. After this profession, the confessor opposes him, and exemplifies the fatal effects of each passion by a variety of apposite stories, gathered from many sources. At length, after a frequent and tedious recurrence of the same process, the confession is terminated by some final injunctions of the priest, the lover's petition in a strophic poem addressed to Venus, the bitter judgment of the goddess, that he should remember his old age, and leave off such fooleries . . . his cure from the wound caused by the dart of love, and his absolution. . . .

"The materials for this extensive work [more than 30,000 lines], and the stories inserted as examples for and against the lover's passion, are drawn from various sources. Some have been taken from the Bible; a great number from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which must have been a particular favourite with the author; others from the medieval histories of the siege of Troy, of the feats of Alexander the Great; from the oldest collection of novels, known under the name of *Gesta Romanorum*, chiefly in its form as used in England; from the *Pantheon* and *Speculum Regum* of Godfrey of Viterbo; from the romance of *Sir Lancelot*, and the *Chronicles* of Cassiodorus and Isidorus." There is also a vast amount of alchemical learning from the *Almagest*, and an exposition of the pseudo-Aristotelian philosophy of the Middle Ages. The author's fancy lies almost buried under the mass of his learning, and his laborious composition shows none of Chaucer's humour, or passion, or love of nature. In the language of the new school of poetry, to which Chaucer's genius had given birth, Gower embodies most of the faults of the romance writers. Still he has his merits. Mr. W. W. Lloyd, in Singer's Shakespeare (vol. iv. p. 261), says: "The vivacity and variety of his short verses evince a correct ear and a happy power, by the assistance of which he enhances the interest in a tale, and frequently terminates it with satisfaction to the reader." The Saxon element is as conspicuous in his language as in Chaucer's, but he uses a larger number of French words, as might have been expected from his early habits of composition. The frequent want of skill in the construction of his sentences shows that it was no easy task for him to write so long a work in English. There are some forms peculiar to him, as *I sigh* for *I saw*, and *nought* for *not*. He seldom uses alliteration. We have a long chain of testimony to Gower's

popularity, from his own age to that of Shakespeare, who introduces him in the Prologue to *Pericles* and makes him speak thus :—

"To sing a song that old was sung,
From ashes ancient Gower is come;
Assuming man's infirmities,
To glad your ear and please your eyes."

The *Confessio Amantis* was first printed by Caxton (London, 1483; fol.) The British Museum has two copies of this rare work. Another folio edition, in black-letter, was printed by T. Berthelette (London, 1532), and reprinted in 1554. None of the modern editions deserve mention beside that by Dr. Reinhold Pauli (London, 1857; 3 vols. 8vo), whose Introductory Essay contains all that is known of the poet and his works.

C.—WYCLIFFE AND HIS SCHOOL.

The revolution effected by Chaucer in poetry was accompanied and aided by an entirely new development of religious literature which, apart from its higher aspect, rendered a similar service to English prose. The new liberty of thought, which found expression in popular literature and in the exercise of private judgment in matters of faith, led to a direct appeal to Scripture; and the reforming teachers satisfied this demand by translating the Bible into the mother tongue. In the other countries of Europe which were affected by the Reformation, the revival of national literature has been connected with a similar work; and if the German Bible of Luther and the Dutch version of 1550 exercised a more powerful influence over their respective languages than the Wycliffite translations, one chief reason is that they appeared after the invention of printing, and were immediately and indefinitely multiplied by that art. In England, this great work is ascribed to JOHN DE WYCLIFFE (*circ.* 1324–1384), whose name is spelt in many different ways. He was born at Wycliffe-on-Tees near Darlington; studied at Oxford; and, having obtained his degree of Master, taught in the University. The mediæval degree, in an age when professorships were unknown, conferred the right of teaching; and the terms Master and Doctor are really synonymous. Wycliffe was, however, a very important person at Oxford in his day. He held a fellowship or fellowships, probably at Merton and Balliol; he also rose to the position of Master of Balliol. He left Balliol after about a year and took the rectory of Fillingham in Lincolnshire, but returned to Oxford in 1363, residing first at Queen's and then as Warden of the recently founded Canterbury Hall. He began early to attack some abuses in the Church; and, after his deposition from his wardenship by Archbishop Langham and the Pope's rejection of his appeal, he gave all his energies to the work of reform, both by his writings and his theological lectures at Oxford. It is useful to remember, first, that his ideas, thus brought into prominence, were by no means new, but that he had had predecessors at Oxford, chief among whom were his master Armachanus, otherwise Richard Fitz-Ralph, Archbishop of Armagh, and the "Profound Doctor," Archbishop Bradwardine. Secondly, he was a Schoolman, and not a Reformer in our sense of the word; to mix him up or identify him with later Lutherans or Calvinists is highly misleading. His theological position, like that of every Schoolman, was complicated by his philosophy; the orthodoxy of the one was impaired by the speculative heresy of the other. As a matter of fact, he belongs to the abstract and idealistic school of Ockham, which, differing from the Realists in no particular of orthodox belief, placed its faith upon different and more intangible grounds. For a long time Wycliffe remained unmolested, and was even regarded as a champion of the National Church. In 1374 he was a member of a commission sent to Avignon, which obtained concessions from the Pope on the question of induction into benefices. He was rewarded by the Crown with a prebendal stall at Worcester and the

vicarage of Lutterworth in Leicestershire, which he held till his death, being secured from the storm of persecution that soon arose by the protection of the king's son, John of Gaunt. It was in the retirement of Lutterworth, after he had been driven from his post at Oxford, that Wycliffe, aided by his friends and disciples, undertook the work of Bible translation. Their version was the basis of that of Tyndale, as Tyndale's was of the authorised versions of 1536 (Coverdale's) and 1611 (King James', which is still in use); but three centuries and a half elapsed before Wycliffe's original translation of the New Testament, and nearly five centuries before his whole version appeared in print. The New Testament was edited by the Rev. John Lewis (1731; fol.); by the Rev. H. H. Baker (1810; 4to); and in Bagster's *English Hexapla* (1841 and 1846; 4to). The Old Testament was first published in the splendid edition by the Rev. J. Forshall and Sir Frederick Madden (Oxford, 1850; 4 vols. 4to). The authorship of the various parts has long been the subject of discussion. According to the latest editions, the Old Testament and Apocrypha, from *Genesis* to *Baruch* (in the order of the LXX), was translated by a priest named NICHOLAS OF HEREFORD (fl. 1390), and the rest of the Old Testament and Apocrypha, as well as the New Testament, by Wycliffe. The whole work was revised, in a second edition, by JOHN PURVEY (1353?–1428?), who has left us a very interesting essay on the principles of translation. The first edition seems to have been completed about 1380, and Purvey's edition about 1388; so that this English Bible was generally circulated by the end of the fourteenth century. Cheap editions of certain portions of the Wycliffite version have been issued by the Clarendon Press, under the editorship of Professor Skeat.

The excellence of the version is to be ascribed to two chief causes, the religious sensibility of the translators, whose spirit was absorbed in their work, and the simple vocabulary and structure of the language, which presented itself newly formed to their hand. Translated as it was from the Vulgate, it naturalised, chiefly in a Latin form, a large stock of religious terms which had been before almost confined to theologians, and at the same time enlarged and modified them. Above all, by preserving the uniformity of diction and grammar suited to the sacred dignity of the work—a uniformity, by the way, not found in nearly so high a degree in Wycliffe's own treatises—it laid the foundation of that religious or sacred dialect which has contributed to secure dignity and earnestness as the prevailing character of our common speech. While satires of the type of *Piers Plowman* gratified the popular disgust at corruptions in high places, the newly-opened well-spring of truth supplied the cure for these evils; and the readiness with which the people received both classes of works enriched their language, while it exercised an influence on their thoughts. Wycliffe's English works have been published, in part, under Mr. Arnold's editorship, for the Clarendon Press, the rest by the Early English Text Society, 1880. A full catalogue of his original works, by Dr. Shirley, is also published by the Clarendon Press. There are also modern editions of his scholastic works published by the Wycliffe Society.

CHAPTER III.

FROM THE DEATH OF CHAUCER TO THE AGE OF ELIZABETH—A.D. 1400–1558.

§ 1. Slow progress of English literature from Chaucer to the age of Elizabeth. Introduction of printing by CAXTON. Improvement of prose. § 2. Scottish literature in the fifteenth century: KING JAMES I; DUNBAR; GAVIN DOUGLAS; ROBERT HENRYSON; BLIND HARRY. § 3. Reign of Henry VII sterile in literature. § 4. Religious literature: Translations of the Bible; Book of Common Prayer; LATIMER; FOXE. § 5. Chroniclers and Historians: LORD BERNERS' *Froissart*; FABYAN; HALL. § 6. Philosophy and Education: WILSON'S *Logic*; SIR JOHN CHEKE; ROGER ASCHAM'S *Schoolmaster* and *Toxophilus*. § 7. Poets: SKELTON, HAWES, and BARCLAY. § 8. WYATT. § 9. SURREY: the English Sonnet. § 10. Ballads of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries: their sources, metre, and modes of circulation. Modern collections by Percy, Scott, etc. Influence on the revival of romantic literature. Ballads of the Scottish Borders and of Robin Hood.

§ 1. THE progress of the literature which had been so manifestly inaugurated by the genius of Chaucer, although uninterrupted, was for a time comparatively slow. Many social and political causes contributed to retard it. At the same time, these very circumstances were the forces which accumulated the nation's energies for the greatest display of intellect it was to give. The age of Elizabeth, following on this period of inaction, is the most splendid epoch in the history of the English people, if not in the annals of the world. But, in the meantime, the causes of delay were the intestine commotions of the Wars of the Roses, the struggle between the dying energies of feudalism and the growing liberties of our municipal institutions, and the great changes consequent upon the Reformation.

Growth of English literature to its culminating point—the age of Elizabeth.

Splendour, fecundity, intense originality, the presence of the national spirit—these are the qualities which give the Elizabethan era so high a place in the history of mankind. In universality of scope, in the influence it was destined to exert upon the thought and knowledge of future generations, no other epoch can be brought into comparison with it. The influence of the age of Pericles or Augustus, of Lorenzo de' Medici or Louis XIV

The Elizabethan era part of the European Renaissance.

is partial when set beside the influence of the age, not only of a multitude of brilliant poets and philosophers, but of Shakespeare and Bacon. It must not be forgotten, on the other hand, that the Elizabethan age cannot be taken by itself, but must be considered as part of a great movement, as the English counterpart of the age of Raffaelle and Michael Angelo, as a derivation, in a sense, from that age—in short, the English manifestation of that intellectual revolution which took place, to a greater or less degree, in every European country, and is known as the Renaissance. Meanwhile, the interval between the end of the fourteenth century and the latter part of the sixteenth, although destitute of any names which can compare in respect of creative energy with that of Chaucer, was a period of great literary activity. The importation of the art of printing, which was first exercised among us by WILLIAM CAXTON, himself a diligent translator, whose style did something towards the formation of a literary standard, unquestionably gave a more regular and distinctly literary form to the productions of the age. The improvement of prose style kept pace with the increase in the number of printed books, while the circle of readers was enlarged, and the influence of popular intellectual activity was extended—for instance, by the dissemination of political and religious discussion as a general habit. Thus an innovation in the art of prose-writing was effected by the Chief Justice, SIR JOHN FORTESCUE, who, beside his celebrated Latin work *De Laudibus Legum Angliæ*, also wrote one in English on the *Difference between an Absolute and Limited Monarchy*. This clever lawyer had his share in the political troubles of the time. As a Lancastrian, he accompanied Henry VI into exile, and afterwards, being taken prisoner at Tewkesbury (1471), was attainted. He obtained his pardon by making peace with the White Rose and acknowledging Edward IV.

WILLIAM CAXTON (*d.* 1491).

SIR JOHN FORTESCUE (1394?–1476?).

§ 2. But, at the beginning of our interval, the greatest names belong to Scotsmen, and of these the greatest is the name of a king. JAMES I is the pathetic hero of one of the most melancholy romances in history. He was the younger brother of that Duke of Rothesay who, by the machinations of his uncle, Albany, was so cruelly starved to death in 1402. The young prince, sent to France by his father, as a precaution against a repetition of such measures, was taken prisoner on the voyage by an English vessel. He remained in captivity from 1406 to 1424, first in the Tower, and afterwards at Windsor. It was during this time that he composed the allegorical poem called *The Kingis Quair* (*i.e.* Quire or Book). One day in 1423 he saw, walking in the garden below his window, Joan Beaufort, daughter of the Earl of Somerset, and, falling then and there in love, composed his

Scottish literature: JAMES I (1394–1437).

"The Kingis Quair."

poem in her honour. Of more actual importance to us is the source from which his work was derived. Its allegorical setting strongly testifies to the influence, conveyed through the French rhetorical poets, of Petrarch, who was at this time, and for many generations to come, the chief intellectual guide of Europe. Its English is, however, clearly the result of the study of Chaucer, to whom, in company with Gower, the king appeals at the close of his book. In spite of the allegorical machinery, which, however excellent, must almost certainly lay any poem under the heavy charge of artificiality, there is a very artless simplicity and directness about *The Kingis Quair*, and constantly the flow of the verse is quickened by a spontaneous outburst of the purest lyric poetry. It is satisfactory to know that the Regent Bedford smiled upon the union of the captive poet with the lady who was the subject of his performance; and, not long after, James was sent back to Scotland and crowned king. He was nevertheless destined to play the leading part in a sad tragedy, for in 1437 he was assassinated at Perth by his nobles, whose unbridled power he had endeavoured to destroy. The extraordinary details of the murder—the warning of the spae-wife, the heroism of the Queen and of Catherine Douglas—are familiar to all readers of Rossetti's wonderful ballad, *The King's Tragedy*. James, as a popular king, left his mark behind him in the ballads which he composed in his national dialect, the famous Lowland Scots—a dialect which was then, and long after, the language of literature, of courtly society, and of theology, and is by no means to be regarded in the modern light of a *patois* or provincial dialect. Even long after the Union of 1707 it was spoken in the best society of Edinburgh, and even now its presence is evident in the speech of the most cultivated Lowlanders. James' Scottish ballads, dealing with the common life of the people, show a remarkable humour, untrammelled and exuberant. One of them, *Christ's Kirk upon the Green*, with Allan Ramsay's excellent but vastly inferior conclusion, is within reach of all students, and attests, perhaps as strongly as *The Kingis Quair*, the powerful and versatile genius of the royal poet. Their authenticity is, however, a matter of opinion.

Death of James I.

His ballads.

Beside King James, Scotland produced about this time several poets of great merit, the chief of whom are WILLIAM DUNBAR and GAVIN DOUGLAS, son of the famous earl, Archibald "Bell the Cat," and Bishop of Dunkeld.

WILLIAM DUNBAR (*about* 1465–1530) *and* GAVIN DOUGLAS (1474–1522).

> "More pleased that, in a barbarous age,
> He gave rude Scotland Virgil's page,
> Than that beneath his rule he held
> The bishopric of fair Dunkeld."

Of these, Dunbar was a powerful and remarkably original

genius, while Douglas, a voluminous and miscellaneous poet, improved and shaped the national dialect and enriched the national literature. The body of Dunbar's work is considerable, and includes a number of compositions of every kind usual at that time. He followed the allegorical tendency of the age very closely. His chief work in this direction was his *Dance of the Seven Deadly Sins*, a satire which, following the strict theological category, is nevertheless marked by a grim and grotesque capacity for invention. And, when we regard such poems as the beautiful *Lament for the Makers*, with its Latin refrain, "Timor mortis conturbat me," we can only endorse the opinion of most recent critics, that between Chaucer and Spenser there is no more considerable poet than Dunbar, who, in this poem, stands on the very border line between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Douglas, in his sense of natural beauty, was a true follower of his master Virgil and a child of the Renaissance. The chief external characteristic of his work is the comparative preponderance of French and Latin words over English. This is partly to be attributed to the close political connection maintained by Scotland with France as a safeguard against English encroachments; but it may also be regarded as the sign of an early attempt at an *estilo culto*, that is, as a Scottish precursor of Euphuism in England and Gongorism in Spain. Douglas was, indeed, before his time in many ways, but his poems, *The Palace of Honour* and *King Hart*, are examples of the contemporary love of allegory. A somewhat earlier but less important member of the same school was ROBERT HENRYSON, a graduate of Glasgow University and probably schoolmaster to the Abbey of Dunfermline, who in his *Testament of Cresseid* continued Chaucer's story of Cressida, and was also the author of the pastoral called *Robene and Makyne*. This melodious piece of verse is to be found in Percy's *Reliques*: its motive was frequently used in after days by other ballad writers. Henryson was well known to contemporary men of letters, and Dunbar speaks with regret of "gude Master Robert Henryson," in his *Lament for the Makers* (about 1506). Another Scottish poet, known as BLIND HARRY, or HENRY THE MINSTREL, wrote, in long-rhymed couplets, a narrative of the exploits of the second great national hero, *William Wallace*. The details of Blind Harry's life are unknown, but his work is full of picturesque and vigorous passages. It must be remembered that he probably belonged to the class of rhyming bards, often itinerant, who extemporised and rhapsodised for the amusement of the baronial class, and that we cannot therefore expect any very full account of him. It is enough to mention his position. JOHN BARBOUR and the rhyming chroniclers of the fourteenth century have already been mentioned.

Style of Douglas.

ROBERT HENRYSON (1430?–1506?).

BLIND HARRY (*fl.* 1470–1492).

§ 3. The activity of Henry VII's reign was political rather than literary. During that period the nation gradually recovered from the effects of civil war: her politic ruler, like Louis XI in France and Ferdinand and Isabella in Spain, brought his people under the domination of an absolute monarchy—a process which had its influence on literature, as upon everything else. Henry VIII, however, was a prince of great learning—in the catholicity of his tastes a true son of the Renaissance. As a theologian and skilled controversialist he attacked Martin Luther in a Latin treatise, for which Clement VII rewarded him with the title of Defender of the Faith. Under himself and his successors this complimentary title has suffered some vicissitude. But Henry added nothing to English literature beyond the example of a royal scholar. His chief fame in this direction lies in his patronage of learned men and in the intellectual brilliance of a Court which contained Surrey, Wyatt, and Sir Thomas More. The fame of SIR THOMAS MORE as a patron of men of letters is greater even than that of his master. He was the chief of that illustrious band of Oxford men who welcomed Erasmus to England—Colet, Grocyn, and Linacre are other illustrious names in this assembly of scholars. William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, Richard Foxe, Bishop of Winchester, and John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, are also prominently connected with the new movement, and aided it with money and by the establishment of foundations for the growth of learning. More, whether as statesman, controversialist, or man of letters, is unquestionably one of the most prominent intellectual figures of the reign. With an extraordinary gentleness and good humour he combined an ardent attachment to the Holy See; and his faith, tested by his logical and philosophical mind, made him the advocate of persecution and induced him to commit acts entirely contrary to his nature. When persecuted himself, and in the presence of a cruel and ignominious death, he retained all the heroic courage of his convictions. His most important work is the philosophical romance of *Utopia*, written in Latin, which is a striking example of the extreme freedom of political and speculative discussion exercised under the sternest tyranny not only with impunity but even with approbation. The fanciful shape into which the project is cast must have prevented any very strict censorship, especially in an age when style and wit were considered more essential than matter. The fundamental idea of the work is Platonic, like so much that was produced by the intellectual energy of the time. It is one of the earliest attempts to give, under the form of a voyage to an imaginary island, the theory of an ideal republic, where the laws, the institutions, the social and political usages, are in strict accordance with philosophical

English prose under the Tudors.

HENRY VIII (1491–1547).

SIR THOMAS MORE (1478–1535).

"Utopia" (1515–16).

perfection. England has been peculiarly fertile in these sports of a politician's fancy. Bacon left a similar work, *The New Atlantis*, unfinished; and James Harrington's *Oceana* is another attempt at the realisation of ideal political theory. This fashion may safely be regarded as a variation upon the serious political treatises of Italian statesmen—Machiavelli's *Prince*, or Guicciardini's *Discourse on the Regiment of Florence*. In Italy itself the same fantastic treatment is to be observed in Tommaso Campanella's *City of the Sun*, published about the end of the sixteenth century. *Utopia*, often translated into English, remains More's chief work; but his English style finds a good example in his *Life of Richard III*, of which Hallam said that it was "the first example of good English language."

§ 4. Parallel with the improvement of general literature, and connected with it in no small measure, must be noted the very general diffusion of religious controversy, consequent upon the spread of the Reformation. Side by side with the doctrinal treatise came the translation of the Holy Scriptures. WILLIAM TYNDALE, who was burned at Vilvorde in 1536, and MILES COVERDALE, Bishop of Exeter (1488–1568), shared between them and at different times the credit of the first English version of the Bible, translated from the original, and their translation was soon followed by the first edition of *The Book of Common Prayer* in 1549. Thus the nation received two models of the finest possible style, grave and dignified without ostentation, and at the same time thoroughly vigorous and intelligible. The Liturgy itself was, in the main, a free adaptation from the missal and office-books of the medieval Church; but the simple and majestic style of the version has given the Anglican Church a singularly noble and sonorous religious diction of its own. The authorised version of the Bible, published in 1611, under the auspices of James I, and the Prayer Book in its final edition of 1662, remain the chief authorities of English style. These events took place at the critical period when the simplicity of a more ancient language was still living, and had not yet been superseded by the polished tongue of a new refinement and civilisation. The effect of this is easily seen, in every period of English literature, in the survival of the force and picturesqueness of the Tudor epoch throughout all changes. Our common talk is, to an immense extent, under the influence of the noble and massive language of the Bible and Prayer Book; and, with their phrases constantly leavening our daily speech, it is impossible that the splendid style of our older writers will ever cease to exercise its living influence in our literature.

Religious literature: the Bible and Prayer Book.

This fervent, simple, idiomatic style, with its rolling periods and virile cadences, is echoed in the writings of many preachers

and controversialists. HUGH LATIMER, Bishop of Worcester, was a powerful orator, whose sermons, rugged in their style, homely in their metaphor, and artless in their choice of words, are still worth reading. He was burned in Mary's reign. Latimer, however, is infinitely surpassed in fire and enthusiasm by the Scottish reformer and controversial writer, JOHN KNOX. Knox cared very little about the graces of style, and cannot be accused of perspicuity; his sentences have no obvious middle or end, nor did he choose his words with any care. He remedied this last defect by a copious vocabulary, full of strong monosyllables and out-of-the-way Lowland terms. His work, in its general roughness and unexpectedness, is almost prophetic of his great countryman, Carlyle. Like most people with a good dictionary behind them, he was apt to mistake the abusive for the forcible, and his manner in addressing his opponents was never marked by sensitive reticence. Most people have heard of his *History of the Reformation in Scotland*; and the scholar will recall his half theological, half political attack on the "monstrous Regiment" (*i.e.* government) of women, directed against Mary of England and Mary of Guise. But the fiery eloquence of his writings, unsurpassed in profound conviction, is ample compensation for his eccentricity and abusiveness. His friend JOHN FOXE, the author of the *Acts and Monuments*, chronicled with something of the same zeal the lives and deaths of the men who were burned for their opinions during Mary's reign. There can be no doubt that the simplicity and popularity of his work was not only the great cause of the movement of the common people in the direction of Protestantism, but spread among them a habit of religious discussion and a consequent tendency to intellectual activity. Somewhat later, in 1562, the same type of thought found an active defender in JOHN JEWEL, Bishop of Salisbury, whose scholarly and liberal *Apology* is still one of the classics of Anglican theology.

HUGH LATIMER (1485?–1555).

JOHN KNOX (1505–1572).

JOHN FOXE (1516–1587).

BISHOP JEWEL (1522–1571).

§ 5. Apart from purely religious disquisition, the pre-Elizabethan period was not without literary productions of more general interest. JOHN BOURCHIER, LORD BERNERS, governor of Calais under Henry VIII, made a lively and picturesque translation of Froissart's great Chronicle, that inexhaustible storehouse of chivalrous incident and medieval detail. The translation is not only remarkable for its faithfulness and vivacity, but its archaism, preserving for the modern reader the quaintness of its original, produces exactly the same impression as Froissart's obsolete French.

Historical literature: LORD BERNERS (1467?–1533).

It is curious to trace the gradual transformation of historical literature. Its first and earliest type, in the ancient as well as in the modern world, is invariably mythical or legendary and

the form in which it then appears is universally poetical. The rhymed chronicles of the Turkish conquests and the innumerable ballads dealing with Spanish history are cases in point. The legend, by a natural transition, gives way to the chronicle or regular compilation of legends—*e.g.* the extraordinary fiction attributed to Geoffrey of Monmouth—and the chronicle eventually becomes the mine from which the philosophical historian extracts his rude material. In ancient times Herodotus and Livy produced their histories from legendary materials, just as Mariana used the ballads and early chronicles for his Spanish history at a much later period. In England the fabulous legends were combined and arranged in the chronicles of the monks and Trouvères, and these, in their turn, gave birth to the prosaic but useful narratives which are the original authorities of the modern historian. The earliest English chronicle is John de Trevisa's translation of Higden's *Polychronicon*, which Caxton continued down to 1460. John Hardyng's metrical chronicle brings us down to the reign of Edward IV. Then follows ROBERT FABYAN with his *Concordance of Histories*, embracing the wide period between Brutus the Trojan and his own time. Fabyan was an alderman and sheriff of London, and EDWARD HALL, his successor in the art of historical gossip, was a prominent London lawyer. Hall, in his *Union of the Two Noble and Illustrious Families of York and Lancaster*, which was first printed in 1542, relates the Wars of the Roses and the history of Henry VII and Henry VIII. These writings, totally devoid of philosophical system or general knowledge, and guiltless of any discrimination between trifling and important events, are nevertheless valuable, not only as vast storehouses of facts which the historian has to sift and classify, but as monuments of language and examples of the popular feeling of their time. In England these chronicles wear a peculiarly *bourgeois* air, and were indeed generally the production of worthy but not very highly cultivated citizens. This was the case with Fabyan. Mixed with much childish and insignificant detail, we find an abundant store of facts and pictures, invaluable to the modern and more scientific historian. Yet, it must be confessed, the interest of these quaint compilations is almost entirely antiquarian; the insight which their tedious detail allows us into the manners of their age is all that can engross the student of literature. It is curious to reflect that, while Englishmen, with the use of a robust and adolescent language, were writing these credulous and garrulous collections of fact and legend, the science of history was progressing abroad under some of the greatest masters of the art. Philippe de Commines had opened the way for French historians,

Historical literature.

ROBERT FABYAN (*d.* 1513).

EDWARD HALL (*d.* 1547).

Lack of system in the early chronicles.

while in Italy, not only Machiavelli and Guicciardini, but a body of able and dispassionate writers—Varchi, Nardi, Segni, and Pitti—were adding fresh links to the great chain of Florentine history and forming the greatest historical literature in the world.

§ 6. The growth of the Universities produced numerous works on philosophy and education. At Oxford and Cambridge the Tudor foundations are the most celebrated and learned of all the colleges. Lady Margaret Beaufort, mother of Henry VII, founded Christ's College in Cambridge, and St. John's College owes its origin to the terms of her will. Her son put the noble Lancastrian foundation of King's College in the same University on a sound footing; while her grandson, Henry VIII, not only filched from Wolsey the glory of founding Christ Church at Oxford, but amalgamated two large and several small medieval colleges at Cambridge into the present Trinity College. Add to this Bishop Foxe's munificent foundation of Corpus Christi in Oxford, the educational activity of Fisher at Cambridge, the foundation of professorships of Divinity, Greek, Hebrew, and Law in either University, and, finally, the tremendous influence exercised by Erasmus on English scholarship—and then we shall understand what the revival of learning in England implied. Learned works were, of course, innumerable, and we may select only a few. THOMAS WILSON'S treatises on *Logic* and *Rhetoric*, published in 1551 and 1553, must be regarded as works far superior in originality and literary correctness to anything that had hitherto appeared in England or elsewhere with relation to so important a subject. The writings of SIR JOHN CHEKE, Provost of King's College, Cambridge, a sound classical scholar, tended to the regulation and improvement of prose. He is remembered as the professor who "taught Cambridge and King Edward Greek." It must not be forgotten, however, that, before Cheke's time, Erasmus had resided and lectured in Cambridge, and that Sir John merely carried on his work with enormous success. Wilson's and Cheke's excellent precepts concerning the avoidance of pedantry and affectation in prose, and, in particular, their ridicule of the prevalent vice of alliteration and the exaggerated subtlety of antithesis, were exemplified by the sober propriety of their own writings. To the same category belongs ROGER ASCHAM, the pupil of Cheke and the learned and affectionate tutor of Elizabeth and Lady Jane Grey. His treatise entitled *The Schoolmaster* (1570), and his book *Toxophilus* (1545), devoted to the encouragement of the national use of the bow, are works remarkable for their reason and pregnancy of thought. Their style is plain, vigorous, and dignified, and would do honour to any epoch of literature. The subject of *Toxophilus*—a project which has been proved

Philosophical literature, etc.

THOMAS WILSON (1526?–1581).

SIR JOHN CHEKE (1514–1557).

ROGER ASCHAM (1515–1568).

practicable by our modern rifle—is an instance of the courtly Italian spirit that, with the decline of feudalism, found its way into English literature—the tendency to regard every accomplishment from the gentleman's rather than from the soldier's point of view. This change of opinion was effected, for the most part, by Baldessar Castiglione's dialogue of *The Courtier*, written before 1518. One can hardly estimate too highly the European influence of this delightful treatise, the most humorous and readable of all the prose works published during the Golden Age of Italian literature. Professor Courthope has treated this influence in literature with a brilliant completeness in the second volume of his *History of English Poetry*. It merely remains for us to observe that the use of the treatise and the dialogue is an invariable sign of this same spirit, which, with all its judicious scholarship, aimed at a certain grace and attractiveness of outward form.

Influence of Castiglione on English society and literature.

§ 7. Although in this period the popular literature of England naturally took, from the force of contemporary circumstances, a polemical, controversial, and, above all, a religious tone, the poetry of the time is nevertheless most important and, in certain cases, engrossing. Certainly no form of literature shows the mark of so rapid, yet so distinct, a transition. It is a long backward step from Ascham and the Tudor scholars to the reign of Edward IV. Somewhere about the beginning of that reign was born JOHN SKELTON, who lived until 1529. This rude genius was a Norfolk man, and is supposed to have acquired considerable classical learning at Cambridge, where he graduated in 1484. He became tutor to Henry VIII in later years, and it is interesting to speculate how far his influence directed the mind and will of that versatile sovereign. Erasmus, a profound admirer of Prince Henry's juvenile sagacity, referred to Skelton, in a Latin dedication to the prince, as "the light and glory of British letters." The laureateship to which Skelton incessantly alludes in his rhymes, was simply, as he says himself, a degree conferred on him at Oxford and Cambridge as a certificate of poetical proficiency, and seems to imply no office at Court. In 1498 he took Holy Orders, and soon afterwards became rector of Diss in Norfolk. So far as we know, he was by no means a model ecclesiastic; his writings alone are enough to show us his contempt for even the superficial decencies of his time. Pre-eminently a coarse and powerful satirist, he used his pen in attacking certain religious and political abuses, and assailed Cardinal Wolsey with an intemperate scurrility. Falling under peril of the minister's wrath, he found protection until his death with Abbot Islip of Westminster. He is buried in St. Margaret's Church at Westminster. His poetical productions may be divided into two categories, the serious and the comic or satiric. The first, consisting of

Poetry.

JOHN SKELTON (1460?–1529).

eulogistic poems addressed to patrons and of allegorical disquisitions of the regular type, may be dismissed at once. Although learned and sometimes energetic in style, these pieces are essentially stiff and pedantic. Nevertheless they were probably much admired in the infancy of English literature, when borrowed conceptions were preferred to original ideas, and learning, on account of its rarity, was valued much more highly than invention. But in his comic poems and satires Skelton struck out a very original, if not a very high, path in literature, in which he had no predecessor and has found no English equal. In spite of their brutality of execution, his furious onslaughts upon Wolsey find very little to compare with them in the history of invective. Their audacity, considering Wolsey's position at Court, is inexplicable; and their apparent impunity, in that age of absolute monarchies and drastic edicts, fills us with amazement. Wolsey is said, however, to have imprisoned Skelton more than once. They are written in a peculiar, short, doggerel measure, the rhymes of which, recurring incessantly and sometimes repeated with an extraordinary violence and rapidity, form an admirable vehicle for unrestrained abuse conveyed in the most familiar and vulgar idiom. Skelton perfectly described and exemplified the character of his "breathlesse rhymes" when he said :—

Skelton's comic poetry and satire.

> "Though my ryme be ragged,
> Tattered and iagged,
> Rudely rayne beaten,
> Rusty and mouthe (moth) eaten,
> If ye take well therwith
> It hath in it some pyth."

All that is coarse, quaint, odd, familiar in the speech of the commonest of the people, combined with a command of learned and pedantic imagery, a wealth of expression almost equal to the exhaustless vocabulary of Rabelais, is to be found in Skelton; and his writings deserve to be studied, were it only as an abundant source of popular English. His freedom of speech and his general archaism give him a little of the interest of Villon; but, while his life was a little more reputable than the career of that scoundrelly rhymer, he had literally nothing of Villon's exquisite poetical genius. His most celebrated poem is the strange extravaganza called *The Tunning of Elynour Rummyng*, a miniature epic in which he describes the attractions of a certain ale-wife's brew, and the furious eagerness of her female neighbours to taste it. Dame Rummyng herself is said to have been a real person who kept an ale-house at Leatherhead in Surrey. Elynour, her establishment, and her thirsty customers, are painted with extraordinary humour under an immense variety of coarse, homely, and vividly realistic images. Of

"The Tunning of Elynour Rummyng."

the humour, knowledge of low life, and force of imagination in the piece, there can be but one opinion. Another very strange pleasantry is *The Book of the Sparrow*, a humorous dirge upon the death of a tame sparrow, the favourite of a young lady who was a pupil in a Norwich convent. The bird was killed by a cat; and, after devoting this cat in particular, and the whole race of cats in general, to eternal punishment, the poet proceeds to describe a funeral service performed by all the birds for the repose of Philip Sparrow's soul. In this part of the poem Skelton takes occasion to parody the various parts of the funeral ritual—a fact which serves to indicate his religious, or, rather, his anti-religious, standpoint. The mixture of Latin and French words with his English, used freely here and in his other works, heightens the comic effects. His purely satiric productions, apart from the attacks on Wolsey, are principally directed against the friars, and against the Scottish king and nation, over whose defeat at Flodden the railing satirist exults most ungenerously. Those who are curious to peruse his diatribes against Wolsey, will find them in the poems entitled *Why Come Ye not to Court? Colin Clout*, and *Speak, Parrot*. The reason of his enmity to the Cardinal is not clear; but it was of a growth subsequent to Wolsey's rise to power, for the *Book of the Three Fools* contains eulogistic verses addressed to the popular minister. Skelton's egoism reaches its climax in his *Garland of Laurel*, a poem in praise of himself, which was written at Sheriff Hutton Castle, near York, before 1520.

"The Book of the Sparrow."

Skelton and the Church.

Two almost contemporary poets deserve mention for their influence upon the intellectual character of their age, although their writings are fallen into neglect. STEPHEN HAWES was a native of Suffolk and a member of the University of Oxford, and most of his life was spent as groom of the king's chamber. Warton described him as the "only writer deserving the name of a poet in the reign of Henry VII." This, however, is not great praise, and his work, a somewhat colourless attempt to carry on the traditions of feudal literature, will not be found very absorbing. Hawes was a student of chivalrous poetry and prose, and depended for the leading ideas of his *Pastime of Pleasure* (1506) upon such books as Lydgate's *Temple of Glass* and Sir Thomas Malory's version of the Arthurian legends. His sources were very numerous, and his work is remarkable rather for its wholesale and laboured borrowing than for any originality of its own. The last of the allegorical poets was ALEXANDER BARCLAY, a Benedictine monk, and, after the dissolution, a secular priest. He was not improbably a Scotsman, but his life was spent in England, and he was at one of the Universities. While a secular priest of Ottery Saint Mary in Devon,

STEPHEN HAWES (*d. before* 1530).

ALEXANDER BARCLAY (1475?–1552).

he made his translation of Sebastian Brandt's *Ship of Fools* (1508), which, although a somewhat dull and ponderous satire, had obtained, in those days of rare books, an immense celebrity. Brandt was a learned civilian of Basel, whose humour took the shape of a contempt for all kinds of ineptness in the shape of vice and crime. *The Ship of Fools*, which had appeared in 1494, soon received a companion in Erasmus' *Praise of Folly* (1513). Barclay's version was an excellent paraphrase of the unreadable satire, while his stanza was flexible and far more harmonious than the rough rhymes of his predecessors. We feel that we are gradually approaching the days of the Italianised stanza and its rhythmic melody. All Barclay's original work, including his Virgilian *Eclogues*, adapted from Æneas Sylvius and Mantuanus, is rough and strongly allegorical; his tone is didactic, and his morality is a great contrast to the grossness of Skelton, whom he appears to have hated. He was for some time a monk of Ely. After the dissolution he held the livings of Much Badew in Essex, and Wookey in Somerset. He died soon after his appointment to the rectory of All Hallows, Lombard Street, and is buried at Croydon.

§ 8. We are now come to the significant names of Surrey and Wyatt, the pair of friends whose poetry sounds the first full note of a new era. They stand at the point where allegory and chivalrous romance ceases to have any meaning, and the elaborate involution of Pagan and semi-Christian mythology disappears before a more correct style—the style of the Court and the ladies' bower. The form of poetry, too, is changed: the epic is set aside for the sonnet. Its spirit is equally altered: love-songs take the place of moral disquisitions. SIR THOMAS WYATT, of Allington Castle, in Kent, was educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, proceeding to his Master's degree in 1520. His acquaintance with foreign literature certainly arose from a period spent in travel. But from 1525 onwards, with the exception of his embassy to Spain in 1537, the chief part of his life was spent at Court. He was the personal friend of Henry VIII, who delighted in his caustic witticisms, and of Cromwell, whose novel and radical opinions he certainly shared; and he was one of Wolsey's numerous enemies. It is reasonable to suppose that, as a perfect courtier he spent a good deal of his time in making love, and his love-poems belong to this second and happy period of his life. In 1536 he was imprisoned in the Tower. There is a story, founded on the title of his verses *To his Love called Anna*, that he had an intrigue with Anne Boleyn, and that this led to his incarceration; but all we know for certain is that he was the victim of a Court cabal, headed by Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. Next year, however, he was knighted, and sent to Spain as am-

SIR THOMAS WYATT (1503–1542).

His life.

bassador to the Court of Charles V. Historical students will realise the delicacy of this somewhat ineffectual mission and of his subsequent embassy to Paris on the same errand—the restoration of a diplomatic understanding between Henry and the Emperor, who had been affronted in the person of his divorced aunt, Katharine of Aragon. Owing to the machinations of Bonner, Bishop of London, who had been sent out to join him in the first embassy, Wyatt was again committed to the Tower on the charge of a treasonable correspondence with Cardinal Pole. After languishing there for some months, he was acquitted before the Privy Council, having delivered a masterly speech in his own defence, and restored to Henry's favour. He died of a fever at his house of Sherborne, and was probably buried in the Abbey Church hard by.

Influence of the Italian sonnet on Wyatt.

Wyatt's poetry is essentially erudite: his reading was wide, and he used many models. But, putting aside his classical and contemporary sources—several passages in his work bear close analogies to passages in Horace—the influence which shines through all his principal pieces is that of Petrarch. It is not necessary here to give an account of the sonnet form, the earliest perfect specimens of which may be easily studied by everybody in Rossetti's book of translations, *Dante and his Circle*. Petrarch (1304–1374), devoting himself almost exclusively to this artificial and expressive form of verse, gave it an indelible character, and stamped it for all future ages. The work of Petrarch is always brilliantly ingenious; but the subjective and metaphysical tendency of the sonnet, and, above all, its formidable grammar of construction, render it anything but spontaneous. This was the author whose manner Wyatt imported into England. His own sonnets, as may be expected, are laboured, and often depend upon the merest conceits, some of them tortured and threadbare to a degree. In one poem he compares his love to a stream falling from the Alps; in another epigram he likens his heart to an over-charged gun. But through all his poetry there runs an artless vein of native simplicity; there are moments when the exotic wealth of Petrarch is forgotten, and the poet relies upon his native riches. Outside the sonnets he displays a wonderful charm and variety of metre, and a capacity (which certainly is not Italian) for vehement and terse lyric writing. His little lyrics—*canzoni*, as the Italians call them—have a novel freshness and ease; they seem to herald that manner which was so readily cultivated and perfected by the Jacobean poets; they have, in short, style, spontaneity, and finish. A beautiful and somewhat foreign characteristic of these pieces is their fondness for a repeated phrase, amounting to a refrain: this connects Wyatt with Clément Marot (who, by the way, was only eight years older than himself, and died two years later) and the

Original merit of Wyatt's poetry.

Other influences discernible in Wyatt.

later Valois school of poetry. With all this natural talent, mingled with a surprising love of art, we have still an echo of the earlier English poets—the eternal cry to the lover to arise and "do his observance" to the month of May, the appeal which Chaucer and the rest had converted into a formula. Such traces of the Chaucerian spirit are not uncommon; and occasionally Wyatt's verse relapses into a descriptive garrulity unknown to Petrarch. For instances of this it is worth while to consult his extremely fine and masculine version of the Penitential Psalms and study his account of David's sorrow. His poetry, composed of these conflicting elements, is a precious legacy whose value can hardly be overrated.

§ 9. Bound up with the first edition of Wyatt's poems, which was printed by John Tottel in his *Miscellany* (1557), were the songs and sonnets of HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SURREY, son of Thomas, third Duke of Norfolk. Surrey's life is a collection of doubtful incidents. Its main facts are these. He was educated in true knightly fashion. While still very young he married Lady Frances Vere, daughter of the Earl of Oxford. At Court he was the chosen companion of Henry VIII's natural son, the young Duke of Richmond, who became his brother-in-law in 1533 and died in 1536. Surrey's early fame rose rapidly: he was the picked knight of the time; and round his exploits at tournaments grew the romantic story of his joustings in Italy, and his championship of the Fair Geraldine. Two or three times his youthful ardour brought him into prison; and a very significant index to his religious views is the fact that one of these imprisonments was a penalty for eating flesh in Lent, and that its original cause was a poetical attack on London, in which he imitated Petrarch's magnificent sonnet on Rome, *Fontana di dolore, albergo d'ira.* His chief exploit abroad was his defence of Boulogne, from which he was recalled in 1546. The sordid family tragedy which followed his recall is a sad piece of backstairs history. It is enough to say that Surrey, accused by the Earl of Hertford, and attainted of high treason, was thrown into the Tower and beheaded on January 19, 1547. The frivolous charge on which he was executed was that he had quartered the arms of Edward the Confessor on his shield! He was buried in All Hallows, Barking, but his body was afterwards removed to the Howard Chapel at Framlingham in Suffolk.

Surrey (1517?–1547).

His life.

Surrey's love-poetry belongs, for the most part, to the pleasant years between 1533 and 1536 when he was with the Duke of Richmond at Windsor—years spent in athletic pursuits and trifling gallantry. Criticism seems unwilling to demolish the story of the Fair Geraldine, whose name is as inseparable from Surrey's as Laura's is

The Fair Geraldine.

from Petrarch's; but although there is no positive evidence against his passion, the only evidence for it is one charming sonnet written in a manner reminiscent of Dante's beautiful *Ognissanti* sonnet. Geraldine was certainly Lady Elizabeth Fitzgerald, daughter of the ninth Earl of Kildare; she was married twice—the second time to Lord Edward Clinton, afterwards Earl of Lincoln. Surrey asserts that he met her at Hunsdon, near Ware, where the Princesses Mary and Elizabeth were being educated at the time. She was, however, only nine years old then, while Surrey was a married man; and it is more probable that his sonnet to her was simply a compliment, and that the rest were indiscriminately addressed to the numerous heroines of—

> "The large green courts where we were wont to rove,
> With eyes cast up into the Maiden tower
> And easy sighs, such as folk draw in love."

Surrey imitated Petrarch and, in so doing, was Wyatt's pupil. Nevertheless his style is more natural than Wyatt's. He is less easily led into conceits. Certainly any reminiscence of the Trojan war brought on a serious attack of the kind, and in one *canzone* he consoles himself for his present pains by meditating on the ten years' toil of the Greeks for Helen. This was a singularly elaborate thought! Again, in his song concerning the lady who refused to dance with him, he commits himself to a tedious, involved, and needless metaphor. This is the exception, for, as a rule, his use of simile and metaphor is curiously unskilled, and is preserved by its dignity alone from being prosaic. His sense of natural beauty, too, was keen, and his sense of colour was almost as fine as that of Propertius or, among later poets, of Keats. Moreover, in metrical excellence and in lyric fluency he was the equal of Wyatt; but his metre underwent less variety, and is, on the whole, much less flexible. One very favourite metre of Surrey's is the ponderous iambic measure, consisting of alternate long and short lines, the long containing fourteen, and the short twelve syllables. This, with its long ambling motion and awkward breaks, is inestimably wearisome. But in Wyatt's own department of the sonnet we have no hesitation in saying that Surrey was vastly the better of the two poets. His sonnets run with a singular smoothness; their style is dignified and restrained; and some of them, the fine poem on Sardanapalus, for example, have a stately movement and unanimity of volume which places them among the highest successes of their kind. And it is certain that there is nothing in Wyatt, and very little in all the remainder of Tudor poetry, which can be compared with Surrey's noble and pathetic lines upon the death of his friend and fellow-poet.

Surrey's style. Comparison with Wyatt.

Surrey brought the sonnet a step nearer Shakespeare. He also used blank verse with daring originality in his translations of Virgil's second and fourth Æneids. Thus he has two claims

upon our attention. His name is inseparable from that of Wyatt, and they naturally provoke comparison. But the fact that Surrey is the more natural, the smoother, the more lovable, the less eccentric poet of the two, is nothing to Wyatt's discredit. Wyatt is the writer who inaugurated the new style: Surrey followed him closely; and both helped to pave the way for Shakespeare. Both represented, in more than one way, the Renaissance spirit, for both were anything but attached sons of the Church, and in their predilection for the new opinions they would find common ground. Wyatt, indeed, was the father of that Sir Thomas Wyatt who raised disturbances in Mary's reign. The events, too, in the life of the one bear a curious resemblance to the events in the life of the other. Wyatt's misfortunes are simply intensified in Surrey's tragedy.

Importance of Wyatt and Surrey in literature.

§ 10. We cannot better conclude our sketch of the transition of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries than by making a few remarks on a peculiar class of compositions which, in England, are unusually plentiful, are marked with an intense impress of nationality, and have exerted, on modern literature in particular, an extraordinary influence. These are our national Ballads, produced, it is probable, in great abundance during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and in many cases owing their origin to the "North Countree," or Border region between England and Scotland. This district, the scene of incessant forays, English and Scottish alike, during the uninterrupted warfare between the two countries, was naturally the theatre of a multitude of wild and romantic episodes, which were consigned to memory in the rude strains of native minstrels. Spain, indeed, in the delightful romances of the Christian and Moorish struggle and in the collection which forms the cycle of the Cid, is the only country in the possession of anything similar in kind or comparable in merit to the old ballads of England. Their manner of composition bears a close analogy to those heroic songs of wandering minstrels, the oral Rhapsodies, from which the material of the Homeric poems is derived. Such minstrels —often blind, or otherwise shut out from active life—gained their bread by extemporising or by repeating legendary songs. As a class, these poets and narrators were very different from the Troubadours and Jongleurs of Southern Europe and the French Courts of Love. The Emperor Frederick II, who gloried in being a Troubadour, would never have condescended to the position of an English ballad-maker. However, these wanderers, in a country ruder and less chivalrous, but not less warlike than Languedoc or Provence, made songs which are inimitable for simple pathos, hot intensity of feeling, and picturesqueness of description. In every country there must exist some typical or national form of versification, adapted to

Ballads.

The ballad-makers.

the genius of the language and to the mode of declamation or musical accompaniment which is employed to assist the effect. Thus Hellenic legendary poetry naturally took the form of the Homeric hexameter: Spanish poetry naturally adopted the loose *assonante* versification, which was so well adapted to a guitar accompaniment. Almost without exception the English ballads affect the iambic measure of twelve or fourteen syllables, rhyming in couplets; so that, by the *cæsura* or pause, they naturally divide themselves into stanzas of four lines, the rhymes generally occurring in the second and fourth. This form of metre, which predominates throughout all these interesting relics, was evolved from the old, long, unrhymed, alliterative measure of *Piers Plowman* and earlier poems. The breaking-up of the lines at the *cæsura*, transforming two into four, seems to have been nothing but a convenient method of copying the long lines into a narrow page; while the readiness with which the lines thus divide themselves may be observed by a comparison with the long metre of the old German *Nibelungenlied*, in which the same system of division and rhyme can be followed.

Metre of the ballads.

Composed by obscure and often illiterate poets, these productions were frequently handed down orally from generation to generation, and orally only. It is to the taste and curiosity of private collectors, and perhaps to their family pride, that we owe the accident by which some of them were copied and preserved. The few that were printed, being destined exclusively for the poorest class of readers, were circulated in mean type and on flying sheets or broadsheets. Vast numbers of them —some perhaps of the first order—have perished; and the system of oral communication has doubtless corrupted the text of those that have come down to us. The first considerable collection of these ballads is contained in the most valuable and excellently annotated volume known as Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, published by Bishop Percy of Dromore, at that time vicar of Easton Maudit, in 1765. It is to this prelate's example that we owe, not only the preservation of these invaluable remains, but the immense revolution produced, by their study and imitation, in our modern literature. For these old English ballads, without exaggeration, had the greatest share in that change of taste and feeling which is known as the romantic revival; and the most popular leader of the movement, Scott himself, owed his inspiration to his devoted and enthusiastic study of the works of the Border rhapsodists. Like the Homeric lays or the Spanish romances, with which they bear analogies of construction, these ballads abound in certain regularly recurring passages, turns of expression, and epithets—the orthodox stock-in-trade of the composer; but these common-

Later collections of ballads.

Percy's "Reliques."

places are incessantly enlivened by some stroke of picturesque description, some vivid piece of natural painting, some simple outburst of heroism, or some convincing touch of pathos. The most famous of these works, and among the oldest, are the ballads of *The Battle of Otterburne*, *Chevy Chase*, and *The Death of Douglas*, which all commemorate some battle, foray, or military exploit of the Border. The class to which these admirable specimens belong bears the evident mark, in its subjects and its pervading dialect, of a Northern, Scottish, or at least Border origin. It would, at the same time, be unjust not to mention that there exist large numbers of ballads, often of very high merit, which are distinctly of English—that is to say, South British, parentage. This class includes the immense cycle of popular poems describing the adventures of the famous outlaw of Sherwood Forest, Robin Hood, and his merry men. Whether Robin Hood ever existed, or whether he was merely a popular myth, is a question beyond the utmost pains of research; but the numerous pieces dealing with his exploits form a very perfect and valuable repertory of national tradition and national traits of character, and Robin Hood himself becomes almost a type of the national spirit. For in these purely English ballads we trace the resistance of the oppressed *yeoman* class to the tyranny of Norman feudalism—the nation against the invader. Scott turned this point to admirable account in *Ivanhoe*, in the scenes of which Robin Hood, under the name of Locksley, is the hero. Such ballads are sure signs of the opposition of popular to exclusively aristocratic feeling. In them we see the germs of the democratic spirit: they commemorate the hostility of the English people against the Norman tyrant; and the bold, joyous, *popular* sentiment which prevails in them stands in acute contrast to the lofty, exclusive, and cultured tone of the Trouvére's legends.

Ballads of Robin Hood.

Significance of the ballad.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

A.—MINOR POETS.

(1.) *The Followers of Chaucer.*

After the death of Gower the flickering light of allegorical and epic poetry went out, and only the ghosts of the real thing remained. Nevertheless, two poets demand mention who, close to one another in age, were in no sense great writers, but remained closely faithful to the Chaucerian traditions.

JOHN LYDGATE (*circ.* 1370–*circ.* 1451) was a native of Suffolk and a monk of Bury St. Edmunds. He travelled, probably in Italy, where he is said to have studied at Padua, and certainly in France; and was well acquainted with foreign literature. He was Prior of Hatfield Broad Oak from 1423 to about 1430, and, returning to Bury in 1434, spent his last years there. Most of his work was done as a commission from princes of the blood and great noblemen, who kept him hard at work; and most of it is translation or adaptation of foreign epics. The chief of these are *The Troy Book*, finished in 1420, and translated at Henry V's command from an Italian epic by Guido delle Colonne; *The Story of Thebes*, an abbreviation of Statius' *Thebais*; and a colossal translation, through a French medium, of Boccaccio's *De Casibus Illustrium Virorum*, which Lydgate called *The Falls of Princes*. This task was undertaken by order of the unfortunate Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester—who perished mysteriously at Lydgate's own town of Bury—and was finished in 1438. These epics, heroic and moral, with many other narrative works, belong to his maturity. Of his earlier works, which were all allegorical, the chief is *The Temple of Glass*, a legend in the common tortured vein of love-allegory. Gray had a very high opinion of Lydgate, and reckoned that "he came nearest to Chaucer of any contemporary writer I am acquainted with. His choice of expression and the smoothness of his verse far surpass both Gower and Hoccleve. He wanted not art in raising the more tender emotions of the mind." This may be; but to prefer Lydgate to Gower and Hoccleve is merely to say that he is a shade less dull; and it must be confessed that these poets act, generally speaking, but as foils to the great genius of Chaucer. Lydgate's work is, of course, interesting to students of language and metre, but to the general reader its usual lack of originality and imagination is a serious drawback for which occasional touches of real poetical feeling hardly compensate.

THOMAS HOCCLEVE (1368 or 69–*circ.* 1450) was, as his name shows, a native of Hockliffe in Bedfordshire, and from 1388 to 1425 was a clerk in the Privy Seal Office. He was a poor poet, but his income from his position probably made him independent of patronage, and his poems—*La Male Regle* (1406) and *Hoccleve's Complaint and Dialogue* (*circ.* 1421)—give us a very interesting glimpse of his personal life and habits. He wrote a rambling allegorical poem, *De Regimine Principum* (1411-12), to counsel the unstaid youth of Henry V. He knew Chaucer and professed himself his disciple in the art of metre; but this, it must be confessed, does not say much for Chaucer's teaching.

One point that should be noticed with regard to these *soi-disant* followers of Chaucer is that their attitude differs entirely from his as regards their own times. Lydgate and Hoccleve mark no progress in English verse: they are reactionaries. By nature they were both incapable of writing English as though it were their own language. Both monk and lawyer would have found themselves more at home in Latin or Norman-French. Lydgate's work

eventually resolved itself into translation. Hoccleve began his career by adapting, without acknowledgment, in his *Epistle to Cupid* (1402), Christine de Pisan's *L'Epitre au Dieu d'Amours*. Both, again, abandon the worldly-wise tone about love and chivalry which Jehan de Meung adopted in his part of the *Roman de la Rose*, and go back, in their allegories, to the stereotyped notions of the feudal period, which, in Chaucer's work, are conspicuous by their absence. And while Chaucer had satirised the abuses of the Church and magnified the virtues of the Wycliffites, Lydgate and Hoccleve show all that fervent orthodoxy which returned with the accession of the House of Lancaster. A great deal of this reactionary spirit may be put down to the circumstances of these poets; but the whole tone of their work is a natural ultra-conservatism. Their admiration of Chaucer was doubtless unfeigned; their failure to imitate his methods arose from their incapacity to comprehend his spirit. Their position sufficiently explains the deadness of English literature in the fifteenth century. Most of their successors in the epic school were men like JOHN HARDYNG (1378-1465?), who wrote a metrical Chronicle of England, coming down to the reign of Edward IV and dedicated to that king. The poetry is wretched and deserves the attention only of the antiquary. In the allegorical school their chief successor was Stephen Hawes, who has been mentioned in the text. No one can say that his work is better than theirs; if he has more command of phrase, and if his art is less strained, he is at all events not a conspicuous step in the path of progress. The real awakening of the Renaissance came late to England. Chaucer was the false dawn before light.

(2.) *Scottish Poetry.*

While Chaucer's influence was thus represented, badly and inadequately, in England, Scottish poetry showed more signs of progress. We have spoken in the text of the brilliancy of Scottish verse in the fifteenth century, when compared with English, and of the chief poets of the school. The transference, if one may call it so, of the Chaucerian spirit to Scotland is no doubt explained by the historical fact of James I's long captivity in England. Its characteristics were vigorously maintained by Dunbar and Bishop Douglas. The dialect of Scottish poetry is, of course, local, and in fact the common *patois* of the North of England. SIR DAVID LYNDSAY (1490–1555), Lord Lyon King at Arms, who was an intimate friend of James V, is the poet who, in Scotland, marks the transition from medieval poetry to the poetry of the sixteenth century. Lyndsay was a pupil, like the other Scottish allegorists, of Chaucer. Like all the Chaucerian school, he shows a strong propensity for imitation of Boccaccio, and there is no trace in his work of that appreciation of form which, during his lifetime, Surrey and Wyatt were deriving from the study of Petrarch. His work is still Gothic and angular, and this provoked Hallam's criticism that "in his ordinary versification he seems not to rise much above the prosaic and tedious rhymers of the fifteenth century." But his poetry is not ugly or even dull, like Lydgate's; it has its human interest. Lyndsay contributed by his poems, as well as by active support, to the Reformation in Scotland. His *Dream* (1528) and his *Complaynt of the Papyngo* (*i.e.* parrot—1530) are satires on Court life and bitter meditations on the state of his country; and there was no more powerful factor in the work of the Reformation in Scotland than his interlude of *The Three Estates*, which was probably first acted in 1540. We come closer to his theological position in *The Tragedy of the Late Cardinal*, a hostile elegy on Cardinal Beaton (1547), which, like Chaucer's Monk's Tale and Lydgate's interminable *Falls of Princes*, was inspired by Boccaccio's *De Casibus*. His last and longest poem is *The Monarchy* (1554), a far from lively dialogue between a courtier and Experience. *Squire Meldrum* (1550) is a spirited chivalrous romance. If, in the matter of form,

Lyndsay makes no decided advance, he is, of all Chaucer's school, intellectually the most forward, and we shall see how the grave and reverend authors of *The Mirror for Magistrates* used his work and ideas.

(3.) *The Companions of Surrey and Wyatt.*

A note is necessary on the collection called Tottel's *Miscellany*, in which, it has been said, the poems of Wyatt and Surrey first appeared. In this, the first printed poetical miscellany in English, we find the influence, not of Chaucer, but of the Italian poets, the sonneteers and song-writers as distinct from the narrative and epic poets, and principally of the great fountain of Renaissance learning, Petrarch. This book, published in June 1557, is the first-born of the English Renaissance. Apart from Surrey and Wyatt, the names of the authors are left to conjecture. SIR FRANCIS BRYAN (d. 1550), the nephew of Lord Berners, the translator of Froissart, and GEORGE BOLEYN, VISCOUNT ROCHFORD, brother of Anne Boleyn, beheaded, two days before his sister, in 1536, are supposed to have had a share in it. More certainty is attached to the part taken by THOMAS LORD VAUX (1510–1556), Captain of the Isle of Jersey under Henry VIII. His lyric, "I lothe that I did love," was adapted by Shakespeare for the grave-digger's song in *Hamlet*, and some of his poems are printed in the collection called *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* (see p. 108). Puttenham, in his *Art of Poesy*, describes Lord Vaux as "a man of much facilitie in vulgar makings." The chief of the band, however, if we are to judge by the initials N. G. appended to several songs in the Miscellany, was NICHOLAS GRIMALD or GRIMOALD (1519–1562), a Huntingdonshire man, who was first at Christ's College, Cambridge, and afterwards, proceeding to his Master's degree at Oxford, became a senior student of Christ Church. As chaplain to Bishop Ridley, for whom he did some theological translation work, he naturally fell into difficulties in Mary's reign, but is said to have recanted in prison. Grimald was primarily a classical scholar, and no doubt his classical essays and his translation of Cicero *de Officiis* (1553), dedicated to Thomas Thirlby, Bishop of Ely, occupied most of his time. His poetical work is full of the classical spirit; it is learned and neat in phrase, and is written, for the most part, in heroic couplets.

We should not forget THOMAS TUSSER (1527–1580), although his work is not, strictly speaking, very memorable. He was born at Rivenhall in Essex, was educated at Cambridge, and passed two years at Court under the patronage of William, Lord Paget. He afterwards settled as a farmer at Cattiwade in Suffolk, where he wrote his didactic poem, *The Hundred Good Points of Husbandry* (1557). He practised farming in other parts of the country, was a singing man in Norwich Cathedral, and died poor in London. His work, after going through four editions, was published in an enlarged form (1577), under the title of *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry, united to as many of Good Huswifery*. It is written in familiar verse, and is, says Warton, "valuable as a genuine picture of the agriculture, the rural arts, and the domestic economy and customs of our industrious ancestors." It is scarcely valuable for any other reason.

B.—MINOR PROSE WRITERS.

If the gap in poetry after Chaucer's death is considerable, the history of prose after Wycliffe is even more desultory. Wycliffe's prose, it should not be forgotten, is by no means to be compared, for literary importance, with Chaucer's poetry: apart from its moral influence, its chief significance is its place in the formation of the vernacular. It is homely and direct—plain language for plain people: it has none of the art of prose-writing about it, and naturally the modern reader studies it with an interest which is almost entirely antiquarian and grammati-

cal. Consequently, while its influence on the language is very great indeed, its influence on literature is small. The natural language of Wycliffe, as a Schoolman, was Latin; and the ecclesiastical writers of the Lancastrian period reverted to Latin as the language of the Church. Italian prose, which became, in the hands of Boccaccio, so delicate an instrument, and all through the fifteenth century went on increasing in power and subtle art, touched no responsive note in the England of Wycliffe's day. English prose, in short, during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, is, wherever it occurs, an individual attempt, not to create a literary language, but to use the spoken vernacular for private purposes. The real impetus to prose-writing as an art was given by the Tudor translators of the classics and of the Italian novelists. It was the accumulated heap of translations, those fine sonorous pieces of work which showed how the Elizabethan mind could appropriate the rhythm and sound of the ancient authors, which prepared the way for the prose of Hooker and the three great Caroline masters, Milton, Browne, and Jeremy Taylor.

In the meantime we may select from the heterogeneous employers of spoken English, REGINALD PECOCK (1395?–1460?), Bishop of St. Asaph from 1444 to 1450, and of Chichester from 1450 to 1457. Although he wrote against the Lollards, his own theological views were very heterodox; he was obliged to recant, was deprived of his bishopric, and passed the rest of his life in prison at Thorney Abbey. His principal work, *The Repressor of Over-much Blaming of the Clergy*, was written in 1449 and published about 1455. There is an excellent edition of this book by Professor Churchill Babington (1863). With respect to its language, we may quote Marsh. "Although, in diction and arrangement of sentences, the *Repressor* is much in advance of the chronicles of Pecock's age, the grammar, both in accidence and syntax, is in many points nearly where Wycliffe had left it; and it is of course in these respects considerably behind that of the contemporary poetical writers. Thus, while these latter authors, as well as some of earlier date, employ the objective plural pronoun *them*, and the plural possessive pronoun *their*, Pecock always writes *hem* for the personal, and *her* for the possessive pronoun. These pronominal forms soon fell into disuse, and they are hardly to be met with in any English writer of later date than Pecock. With respect to one of them, however—the objective *hem* for *them*—it may be remarked that it has not become obsolete in colloquial speech to the present day; for in such phrases as *I saw 'em*, *I told 'em*, and the like, the pronoun *em* (or *'em*) is not, as is popularly supposed, a vulgar corruption of the full pronoun *them*, which alone is found in modern books, but it is the true Anglo-Saxon and old English objective plural, which, in our spoken dialect, has remained unchanged for a thousand years."

SIR THOMAS MALORY, who lived in the reign of Edward IV, is the exception who proves the general rule with regard to the prose of the late Plantagenet era. As a matter of fact, he is the first of the translators. His *Morte Arthur*, printed by Caxton in 1485, is a compilation and translation of the various legends which, during the Middle Ages, had sprung round the heroic name of King Arthur. The Britons who had fled before the Saxon invasions into Armorica, men like the historian Gildas, had taken with them the memory of the great king, and had built up round it the Arthurian cycle of epic traditions, which had found its way back into Britain and had proved so fruitful a mine for the Norman chroniclers to draw from. In the difficult task of welding this confused mass of myths together Malory proved himself a master. His story is, naturally enough, rambling and disconnected in detail, but its episodes hang together well enough to show that Malory had a considerable sense of form; and the general impression which it leaves is that of a chronicle with a logical

sequence of events. At the same time the style is picturesque and romantic; it has the colloquial character of the day; but there is much of the art of story-telling in it, and that sense of the effectiveness of words which is the secret of style. In this respect it can well compare with the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles* or any contemporary work of French prose. An attempt at this date to bring together these legends might have proved the *coup de grâce* of the Arthurian romance: in Malory's hands the story has been handed down, with all its freshness, to our own century.

Beside those of whom we have already spoken, the most eminent writers of prose during the early Tudor period were as follows:—

JOHN BALE (1495–1563), Bishop of Ossory in Ireland, was the author of several theological works. We shall have more to say in another chapter about his coarsely satirical plays and interludes, which, in their attitude towards political and religious abuses, bear a strong family likeness to Lyndsay's *Pleasant Satire of the Three Estates*. The work by which he is best known is the *Britanniæ Scriptores*, written in Latin, and containing an account of illustrious writers in Great Britain from Japhet to the year 1550.

JOHN BELLENDEN (d. 1587?), Archdeacon of Moray in the reign of James V, deserves mention as one of the earliest prose writers in Scotland. His translation of the Scottish History of the monk Hector Boece (not to be confounded with Boëthius), was published in 1536.

GEORGE CAVENDISH (1500–1561?)—not, as is frequently stated, Sir William—was gentleman-usher to Cardinal Wolsey, and wrote his master's life, from which Shakespeare and Fletcher, in *Henry VIII*, borrowed many passages. The book is a small masterpiece of simple and eloquent narrative prose, and deserves the closest attention from every reader.

SIR THOMAS ELYOT (1490?–1546) was an eminent scholar in the reign of Henry VIII, by whom he was employed in several embassies. He shares with Sir Thomas More the praise of being one of the begetters of English prose. His *Governor* (1531) may almost stand beside *Utopia* as an attempt at the construction of an ideal commonwealth. With few of the graces of style, it shows a firm grasp of practical common-sense, and its theories of education are especially valuable. The spread of treatises of this kind, written in a serious and sober style, is a reflection of the Italian fashion of the day, and shows that, with the influence of Petrarch on English poetry, a certain Italianism crept into English prose.

JOHN FISHER (1459?–1535), Cardinal and Bishop of Rochester, was put to death by Henry VIII a fortnight before Sir Thomas More. His English works are sermons; but his great claim to renown is the service which he did to English education. In his love for learning he was a true prelate of the Renaissance. As President of Queens' College he invited Erasmus to Cambridge, and so helped to lay the foundation of Greek scholarship in England; as spiritual director of Lady Margaret Beaufort, he aided her in establishing her professorships at Oxford and Cambridge, and in the foundation of Christ's College in Cambridge. After her death he carried out her legacy by founding St. John's College in the same University. English learning is under an enormous debt to this enlightened bishop, a man of great piety and a martyr for conscience' sake, the foremost of the band who improved the whole groundwork of education in England.

JOHN LELAND (1506?–1552), the eminent antiquary, was educated at St. Paul's School, London, and at Cambridge and Oxford. He received several ecclesiastical preferments from Henry VIII, who also gave him the title of the King's Antiquary. Beside his Latin works he wrote in English his *Itinerary*, giving an account of his travels. The work is quaint, but a little dreary; it is still of great value for English topography. It was not published until 1710, when an edition was prepared at Oxford.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ELIZABETHAN AND JACOBEAN POETS— A.D. 1558–1625.

§ 1. Characteristics of the Elizabethan age of literature. § 2. The less-known writers of this period: GASCOIGNE; TURBERVILE; THOMAS SACKVILLE, Lord Buckhurst. §§ 3, 4. EDMUND SPENSER: his personal history; *The Shepherd's Calendar*; his friendship with Harvey and Sidney; favoured by Leicester and Elizabeth; disappointments at Court; residence in Ireland; misfortunes, and death. § 5. *The Faëry Queen*; analysis and criticism. Brilliancy of imagination; defects of plan; allusions to persons and events. § 6. Detailed analysis of the Second Book, or *Legend of Temperance*. § 7. Versification of the poem; adaptation of style to metre; Spenser's boldness in dealing with English. § 8. Character of Spenser's genius: his minor works. § 9. SIR PHILIP SIDNEY: his accomplishments and heroic death; his *Arcadia*, *Sonnets*, and *Defence of Poesy*. § 10. The Jacobean Poets:—(i.) DANIEL; (ii.) DRAYTON; (iii.) SIR JOHN DAVIES; (iv.) DONNE; (v.) HALL, English satire. § 11. The Fletcher family: PHINEAS and GILES FLETCHER.

§ 1. THE characteristic features of the age of Elizabeth give it an unique place in the history of the world. It was a period of sudden emancipation of thought, of immense fertility and originality, and of high and generally diffused intellectual culture. The language, thanks to the various causes already indicated, had reached its highest perfection; the study and imitation of ancient and foreign models had furnished a vast store of materials, images, and literary forms, which had not yet had time to become commonplace and over-worn. The poets and prose writers of this age, therefore, united the freshness and vigour of youth with the regularity and majesty of manhood; and nothing can better demonstrate the intellectual activity of the epoch than the number of excellent works which have become obsolete in the present day, solely because their merits have been eclipsed by the glory of a few incomparable names—by Spenser in romantic and Shakespeare in dramatic poetry. The task of the present chapter is to give a rapid sketch of some of the great works thus darkened with excess of light.

The Elizabethan era.

§ 2. The first name is that of GEORGE GASCOIGNE, who, as one of the founders of the great English dramatic school,

as a satirist, and as a lyric and narrative poet, occupies a prominent and honourable place. He was the son of a Bedfordshire knight, and was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge. His life was active, and condensed within its bounds a good deal of experience. He sat twice in Parliament; he was a courtier; he went to the wars and fought the Spaniards in Holland; and certainly, during his early life, he acquired some of that fatal Italianism of manners and conduct for which, as we shall see, the Englishman of Elizabeth's reign became far too celebrated. In 1566, while at Gray's Inn, he translated Ariosto's comedy, *I Suppositi*, calling his version *The Supposes*, and also adapted Euripides' *Phœnissæ* in a play which he called *Jocasta*. In 1575, on his return from the Netherlands, he brought out a book full of charming lyrics, called "Flowers," "Herbs," and "Weeds." The title of the whole book is too long to quote. As he grew older his thoughts seem to have assumed a more serious complexion. Instead of translating—as he had done, among other things—from the licentious Italian novelists, he turned his attention to satire and moral comedy. *The Glass of Government* (1575) is, for example, a strict Morality. But his most important production, at least in point of length, is the moral or satiric declamation called *The Steel Glass* (1576), in which he inveighs against the vices and follies of his time. It is written in blank verse, and is one of the earliest examples of that kind of metre, so well adapted to the genius of the English language. Gascoigne's versification, although harsh and monotonous, is fairly regular and has a certain dignity. The whole poem displays considerable observation and knowledge of life, and its tone is very edifying. The same tendency to moralise is visible in all Gascoigne's later work; and, after his death, George Whetstone, the author of *Promos and Cassandra*, published a poem called *The Well-employed Life and Godly End of G. Gascoigne, Esquire.* Gascoigne's own early poems, *Don Bartholomew of Bath* and *Dulce Bellum Inexpertis*, give us some authority for the poet's unregenerate career.

Less-known poets: GEORGE GASCOIGNE (1525?–1577).

Nearly contemporary with Gascoigne was GEORGE TURBERVILE, whose *Epitaphs*, *Epigrams*, *Songs and Sonnets* (1567) contain all his original work—love-epistles, epitaphs, and complimentary verses. Turbervile was born at Whitchurch Canonicorum in Dorset, went to Winchester College, became a fellow of New College in 1561, left Oxford for the Inns of Court, and went as Secretary of Legation to Russia. In addition to his original poetry he published quite a number of translations. He is remarkable for his singular attention to style and metre, and for his steady attempt to reduce the harshnesses of Wyatt and Surrey to an even harmony of form.

GEORGE TURBERVILE (1540?–1610?).

A poet whose writings—lofty, melancholy, and moral—un-

doubtedly exerted a great influence at a critical period in the infancy of English literature was THOMAS SACKVILLE, Lord Buckhurst, of whose life we shall have something more to say later on (see p. 106). Ascham had been a friend of his father, Sir Richard Sackville, and wrote *The Schoolmaster* for Thomas' children. Sackville is said, without proof, to have projected the famous *Mirror for Magistrates*, which was intended to contain a series of tragic examples of the vicissitudes of fortune, drawn from the English annals, to serve as lessons of virtue to future kings and statesmen and as warnings of the fragility of earthly greatness and success. He composed the *Induction* or prelude to this grave and dignified work, and also the first legend or complaint, in which are commemorated the power and the fall of the Duke of Buckingham, favourite and victim of the tyrannical Richard III. It is owing to the prominent part taken by Sackville that the idea of the whole work has been attributed to him. His work is, at all events, vastly superior to that of the poets who continued the collection thus begun. A further account of *The Mirror for Magistrates* will be found in the Notes and Illustrations to the present chapter. The melancholy and Dantesque cast of Sackville's mind is certainly remarkable, and colours not only his contribution to this anthology of misfortune, but the play of *Gorboduc*, with part of which he enriched our dramatic literature.

THOMAS SACKVILLE (1536–1608).

§ 3. A period combining a scholarlike imitation of antiquity and of foreign contemporary literature—principally that of Italy—with the force, freshness, and originality of the dawn of letters in England, might have been fairly expected to produce a great imaginative and descriptive work of poetry. The illustrious name of EDMUND SPENSER occupies a place among the writers of England similar to that of Ariosto among the writers of Italy; and the union in his works—and particularly in his greatest work, *The Faëry Queen*—of original invention and happy use of existing materials fully warrants the unquestioned verdict which names him the greatest English poet intervening between Chaucer and Shakespeare. His career was brilliant but unhappy. He is supposed, on his own authority, to have belonged to a younger branch of the illustrious Spencers of Althorp, but his father was traditionally a London cloth-maker. He went to Merchant Taylors' School, and in 1569 entered Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, as a sizar. In the same year appeared an English translation, under the original author's patronage, of Jan van der Noodt's *Theatre of Voluptuous Worldlings*, in whose edifying pages were contained certain appropriate translations, afterwards assigned to Spenser, from Petrarch and Joachim du Bellay. Undoubtedly Spenser's career at Cambridge was very creditable, and he acquired there an amount of learning remarkable even in that age

EDMUND SPENSER (1553–1599).

Life.

of solid and substantial studies. He proceeded to his Master's degree in 1576. At Pembroke he came across the learned Gabriel Harvey, some five or six years his senior, who was a tutor of the college and was much disliked by the Society on account of his arrogance. Harvey, whom it will hardly be necessary to mention separately, was born at Saffron Walden, where his father was a rope-maker, in 1547, and died in 1630. His unquestionable talent as a rhetorician was rendered ridiculous by certain literary hobbies, and especially by his mania for employing the ancient classical metres, founded on quantity, in English. Spenser became one of his most ardent supporters, and was for a time infected with his freaks. However, this was only temporary, and Harvey's notoriety rests, not so much upon his connection with Spenser, as on the bitter satire called *Have with you to Saffron Walden*, in which he was assailed by his enemy Thomas Nash, the pamphleteer and dramatist. Spenser left Cambridge soon after taking his Master's degree, and is supposed to have gone into Lancashire, perhaps as a private tutor, and there, having met with his Rosalind, to have begun writing *The Shepherd's Calendar*. Two years later, in 1578, he left the North, and, on Harvey's recommendation, entered the household of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. It was as a member of Leicester's family that he met Philip Sidney, the Earl's nephew, and acquired his favour. *The Shepherd's Calendar*, which was published in 1579, was dedicated to "the noble and vertuous Gentleman most worthy of all titles both of learning and cheualrie M. Philip Sidney." *The Shepherd's Calendar* consists of a series of "Æglogues" divided into twelve parts or months, in which, as in the Bucolics of Virgil, under the guise of idyllic dialogues, his imaginary shepherds discuss high questions of morality and state, and pay refined compliments to illustrious personages. In these eclogues he endeavoured to give a national air to his work by painting English scenery and English climate, by selecting English names for his rustic persons, and by infusing into their language many provincial and obsolete expressions. The extraordinary superiority in power of imagination and harmony of language which this poem exhibited immediately placed Spenser among the foremost poets of his day, and attracted the favour and patronage of many other protectors. He was presented to Elizabeth, whose worshipper and flatterer *par excellence* he was to become; and thus began his life as a courtier. Meanwhile, he appears to have written a great many poems which are now either lost or incorporated in other works. He had begun *The Faëry Queen* before 1580.

Spenser's friendship with Gabriel Harvey.

"The Shepherd's Calendar" (1579).

§ 4. When, in 1580, Lord Grey de Wilton was nominated Lord Deputy of Ireland, Spenser went with him as private secretary, and filled several posts of trust beneath him. He

received, at the plantation of Munster, an estate thirty miles from Cork, which he was to occupy and cultivate. This manor, which included over three thousand acres, was confiscated by the English Government, with the rest of the Earl of Desmond's property, in 1586. *Spenser in Ireland.* Spenser lived at Kilcolman Castle, the mansion on the estate, for several years, and went on with *The Faëry Queen*. Ralegh, who was then living at Youghal, came to visit him in 1589, and was so delighted with the first three books of the poem, which Spenser showed him, that he took the author with him to London and presented him again to Elizabeth. The Queen, pleased with the flattering tone of the work, granted Spenser a pension of £50. The Lord Treasurer Burghley is said to have objected to a larger grant. At the end of 1589 the first three books of *The Faëry Queen* were entered at Stationers' Hall, and were published in 1590. Soon after he returned to Kilcolman, and, in 1594, married a lady who, it is generally supposed, was Elizabeth Boyle, a kinswoman of the Earl of Cork. Between 1591 and 1595 he published, "from my house at Kilcolman," several poems, including *Colin Clout's Come Home Again* (1595), in which, with a profusion of pastoral conceits, he gave his impressions of London and the Court; and *Epithalamion* (1594), in which he celebrated his wedding. In 1591 Ponsonby published for him a miscellaneous volume of *Complaints*, and, in 1595, the *Amoretti*, or love-sonnets, of which his wife is the heroine; while, in January, 1596, three more books of *The Faëry Queen* appeared. Unfortunately, in 1598, soon after his nomination as Sheriff of Cork, the great rebellion under the Earl of Tyrone, which had been raging in the northern province of Ulster, spread to the region surrounding Spenser's retreat. He had probably, as an innovator, rendered himself hateful to the half-savage Celtic population whom the English colonists had ejected and oppressed; indeed, the very curious tract, written earlier in this very year and called *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, in which he powerfully defended Lord Grey's policy and described the curious manners and customs of the indigenous race, indicates plainly enough that the poet shared the prejudices of his race and position. Kilcolman Castle was attacked and burned by the insurgents. Spenser and his family escaped with difficulty, losing all they possessed, and suffering, it is said, the still more cruel bereavement of a young child which was left behind and perished in the house. Completely ruined, and overwhelmed by so tragic an affliction, Spenser returned to London, and died in King Street, Westminster, if we are to accept Ben Jonson's statement, "for lack of bread," forgotten by the Court and neglected by the majority of his patrons. This was on January 16, 1599. He was followed, however, to his grave with the unanimous admiration of his countrymen, who bewailed in his death the loss of the greatest *His death.*

poet of the age. He was buried with great pomp in Westminster Abbey, near the tomb of Chaucer.

§ 5. Spenser's greatest work, *The Faëry Queen*, is a poem whose subject is chivalric, narrative, and descriptive, but, above everything else, allegorical. Its execution is derived in a great degree from Boiardo and Ariosto, and, in point of chronology, it comes very soon after the *Gerusalemme Liberata* of Tasso. It was originally planned to consist of twelve books or moral adventures, each typifying the triumph of a Virtue, and couched under the form of an exploit of knight-errantry. The hero of the whole was to be the mythical Prince Arthur, the type, in Spenser, of perfect virtue, just as he is the ideal hero of a vast collection of medieval legends. This fabulous personage is supposed to fall in love with the Faëry Queen, who appears to him in a dream; and, arriving at the court in the land of Faëry, he finds her holding her annual twelve days' festival. Upon these twelve days arise the occasions of the adventures which were to be related in the twelve books of the poem, each of them being undertaken by some knight of the court of Gloriana, Queen of the land of Faëry. The First Book relates the expedition of the Red-cross Knight, the allegorical type of Holiness, to rescue the ancestral realm of his mistress Una, the representative of Religion, from the foul dragon of Heresy. The Second Book tells the adventures of Sir Guyon, or Temperance; and the Third, those of Britomartis, or Chastity. It must be remarked that each of these books is subdivided into twelve cantos, and that the poem, even in the imperfect form under which we possess it, is consequently very voluminous.

"The Faëry Queen."

These first three books were published, we have said, in 1590, and dedicated to Elizabeth. The three following books, which appeared in 1596, contain the following legends: in the Fourth we find the Legend of Cambell and Triamond, an allegory of Friendship; in the Fifth, the Legend of Artegall, or of Justice; and in the Sixth, the Legend of Sir Calidore, or of Courtesy. Thus half of the original design was executed. What progress Spenser made in the six remaining books it is now impossible to ascertain. There are traditions which assert that this latter portion was completed, but that the manuscript was lost at sea; while the more probable theory is that Spenser had no time to complete his extensive plan, but that the dreadful misfortunes amid which his life ended prevented him from bringing it to perfection. The extant fragment, consisting of two cantos and two stanzas of a third upon the theme of Mutability was to have been inserted, according to tradition, in the legend of Constancy, one of the books projected. The vigour, invention, and splendour of expression that flow so brightly in the first three books manifestly decline in the fourth, fifth, and sixth; and we need not, perhaps, regret that the poet never completed so vast a

design, whose very nature necessitated a monotony that not all the fertility of genius could have obviated. We may apply to *The Faëry Queen* the paradox of Hesiod, "the half is more than the whole." In this poem three different elements are united which at first sight would appear almost irreconcilable. The skeleton or framework of the action is derived from the feudal or chivalric legends; the ethical or moral sentiment from the lofty ideal philosophy of Plato, which is harmonised, in a manner agreeing with the general tone of contemporary education at Cambridge, with the most elevated Christian purity; while the form and colour of the language and versification is saturated in the flowing grace and sensuous elegance of the great Italian poets of the Renaissance. The principal defects of *The Faëry Queen*, as a whole, arise from two causes apparently opposed, yet conveying a similar impression to the reader. The first is a want of unity, which involves a loss of interest in the story; for we altogether forget Arthur, the nominal hero of the whole, as we follow each separate adventure of the subordinate knights. Each book is therefore intrinsically a separate poem, and excites a separate interest. The other defect is the monotony of character inseparable from a series of adventures which, although varied with an inexhaustible fertility, are all, from their chivalric nature, fundamentally similar, being either combats between one knight and another, or between the hero of the moment and some supernatural being—a monster, a dragon, or a wicked enchanter. In these contests, however brilliantly painted, we feel little or no suspense, for we are beforehand nearly certain of the victory of the hero; and, even were this otherwise, the knowledge that the valiant champion is himself nothing but the impersonation of some abstract quality or virtue would be fatal to that interest with which we follow the vicissitudes of human fortune. Hardly any degree of genius or invention can long sustain the interest of an allegory; and where Bunyan's intense realism has only partially succeeded, the unreal phantasmagoria of Spenser's imagination, brilliant as it was, could not do other than fail. The strongest proof of the justice of these remarks will be found in the fact that those who read Spenser with the greatest delight are precisely those who, entirely neglecting the moral lessons typified in his allegory, endeavour to follow his heroes' adventures as they would follow those of human beings, voluntarily surrendering themselves to the mighty magic of his unequalled imagination. Another result to be deduced from the above considerations is, that Spenser, although extremely monotonous and tiresome to the ordinary reader who determines to plod doggedly through two or three successive books of *The Faëry Queen*, is the most enchanting of poets to him who, endowed with a lively fancy, confines his attention to one or two at a time of his delightful episodes, descriptions, or impersona-

Composition of the poem.

Its defects.

tions. Independently of the general allegorical meaning of the persons and adventures, it must be remembered that many of these were also intended to contain allusions to facts and individuals of Spenser's own time, and particularly to convey compliments to his friends and patrons. Thus Gloriana, the Faëry Queen herself, as well as the beautiful huntress Belphœbe, were intended to allude to Elizabeth ; Sir Artegall, the Knight of Justice, is Lord Grey ; and the adventures of the Red-cross Knight shadow forth the history of the Anglican Church. In all probability a multitude of such allusions, now become obscure, were clear enough, when the poem first appeared, to those who were familiar with the courtly and political life of the time ; but the modern reader will little regret the dimness in which time has plunged these references, for they serve only to the further complication of an allegory which of itself often detracts from the charm and interest of the narrative.

Contemporary allusions in "The Faëry Queen."

§ 6. A rapid analysis of the Second Book, or Legend of Temperance, will give some idea of Spenser's mode of conducting his allegory. In Canto I the wicked enchanter Archimago, meeting Sir Guyon, informs him that a fair lady, supposed by the knight to be Una, but in reality the false Duessa, has been foully outraged by the Red-cross Knight. Guyon, led by Archimago, meets the Red-cross Knight, and is on the point of attacking him, when the two champions recognise each other, and, after courteous conference, part. Sir Guyon then hears the despairing cry of a lady, and finds Amavia, newly stabbed, lying beside the dead body of Sir Mordant, and holding in her lap a babe with his hands stained by his mother's blood. After relating her story the lady dies. Canto II describes Sir Guyon's unsuccessful attempts to wash the babe's bloody hands. He then finds his steed gone, and proceeds on foot to the castle of the lady Medina, or Golden Mean, where dwell also her two sisters, Elissa and Perissa—Too Little and Too Much—with their knights. Canto III contains the adventures of the boaster Braggadocchio, who steals Guyon's steed, and, with his man Trompart, meets Archimago and the fair Belphœbe. Belphœbe herself is described with consummate beauty. In Canto IV Guyon delivers the youth Phedon from the violence of Furor and the malignity of the hag Occasion. In Canto V he fights with Pyrochles, who unbinds Furor, and is then wounded by him ; and Atin, Pyrochles' varlet, flies to obtain the aid of Cymochles. Canto VI gives a rich and most exquisite picture of the temptation of Guyon by the Lady of the Idle Lake, and contains the fight with Cymochles. In Canto VII is contained the admirable description of the Cave of Mammon, who tempts Sir Guyon with the sight of his subterranean riches. Canto VIII shows how Guyon, falling into a trance, is disarmed by the sons of Acrates, and delivered

Analysis of the Second Book of the poem.

by Arthur. Canto IX describes the House of Temperance, the body, inhabited by Alma, the soul—a beautiful description, in which each bodily part and mental faculty is typified. Canto X gives a chronicle, from a book found by Guyon in Alma's house, of the ancient British kings down to the reign of Gloriana, or Elizabeth. In Canto XI the Castle of Temperance is besieged, and delivered by Arthur. In the twelfth and last Canto we have Guyon's attack upon the Bower of Bliss, and the ultimate defeat of Acrasia, or Sensual Pleasure. From this very rough and meagre analysis, which is all that the present limits will permit, the reader may in some measure judge of the conduct of the fable in Spenser's great poem.

§ 7. The versification of the work is founded upon a peculiar stanza, derived from the *ottava rima* so universally employed by the romantic and narrative poets of Italy, and made familiar by the masterpieces of Tasso and Ariosto. To the eight lines, each of ten syllables, which compose this form of metre, Spenser's exquisite taste and consummate ear for harmony induced him to add a ninth, which, being of twelve syllables, winds up each phrase with a long lingering cadence of the most delicious melody. We have already observed how extensively the forms of Italian versification—as in the various examples of the sonnet and the heroic stanza—had been adopted by the English poets; and we have insisted, particularly in the case of Chaucer, on the skill with which our language, naturally rude, monosyllabic, and unharmonious, had been softened into melody until, in power of musical expression, it was little inferior to the tongues of Southern Europe. None of our poets is more exquisitely and uniformly musical than Spenser. Indeed, the sweetness and fluency of his verse is sometimes carried so far as to become cloying and enervating. The metre he employed was very complicated, and made the frequent recurrence of similar rhymes in each stanza necessary—namely, four of one ending, three of another, and two of a third. Consequently, he was obliged to take considerable liberties with the orthography and accentuation of the English language. In doing this, in giving to our metallic northern speech the flexibility of the liquid Italian, he shows himself as unscrupulous as masterly. By employing an immense number of old Chaucerian words and provincialisms, and even by inventing occasional words himself, he furnishes his verse with an inexhaustible and various vocabulary; but at the same time the reader must remember that much of this was a dialect that never really existed. Its peculiarities have been less permanent than those of almost any other of our great writers.

Spenser's versification.

§ 8. The power of Spenser's genius consists not in any deep analysis of human passion or feeling, nor in any skill in the delineation of character, but in an unequalled richness of

description, in the art of representing events and objects with an intensity that makes them visible and tangible. He describes *to the eye*, and communicates to the airy conceptions of allegory the splendour and vivacity of visible objects. He has the exhaustless fertility of Titian, with something of the same voluptuous richness of colour. Among his other poems, the most important are *Mother Hubbard's Tale* (in the *Complaints* of 1591); his famous elegies, *Daphnaida* and *Astrophel*, the first on the wife of his friend Arthur Gorges, the second on Sir Philip Sidney; all his sonnets, and, above all, the magnificent *Epithalamion*, one of the richest and most chaste marriage-hymns in all literature, full of warmth, dignity, intense passion, and noble elevation and purity of sentiment. Here, too, as well as in innumerable passages of *The Faëry Queen*, we see the influence of the lofty and abstract philosophical idea of the identity between Beauty and Virtue, which Spenser found in his Platonic studies.

General characteristics.

Minor poems.

§ 9. The name of SIR PHILIP SIDNEY occurs so frequently in the literary history of the age, and had so powerful an influence upon the intellectual progress of his time, that any notice of the period necessarily demands some allusion to his life. He was the son of Sir Henry Sidney of Penshurst in Kent, and, on his mother's side, nephew of Robert Dudley, the famous Earl of Leicester. His father held many honourable offices under the Crown, and made his mark in history as Lord Deputy of Ireland from 1565 to 1571 and 1575 to 1578. While he was Lord President of Wales, in 1564, he sent his son to Shrewsbury School. In 1568, the boy passed from Shrewsbury to Christ Church, Oxford. It is hardly necessary to give any detailed account of his career as a courtier and diplomatist, which lasted from 1572 till his death in 1586. He united in his own person almost all the most fascinating qualities, whether natural or acquired—nobility of birth, beauty of person, bravery, generosity, learning, and courtesy, and he has been reckoned ever since as the *beau idéal* of the courtier, soldier, and scholar. His most abiding intellectual impressions seem to have been derived from his friendship with Hubert Languet, a distinguished Huguenot scholar whom he met at Frankfort in 1573. Although much concerned with politics, his real interest lay in the direction of letters, and his high position at Court gave him the headship of that literary coterie of which both Gabriel Harvey and Spenser were members. Owing partly to a quarrel on a point of etiquette with the Earl of Oxford, who was also at the head of a literary clique, and partly to his openly expressed objections to the Queen's proposed marriage with the Duke of Anjou, afterwards Henry III of France, Sidney vanished from Court in 1580, and retired to Wilton, near Salisbury, the seat of his brother-in-law, Lord Pembroke.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY (1554–1586).

Life.

Here he wrote the *Arcadia*. But in the autumn of the year he went back to Court, and, in 1581, sat in Parliament for his county. In 1583, he was made co-Master of the Ordnance with his uncle, the Earl of Warwick, and married Frances, daughter of the Secretary Walsingham. At this time he took a great interest in the American colonies, and it was in order to prevent him from going too far afield that Elizabeth, as Protectress of the Netherlands, appointed him, in 1585, Governor of Flushing. He proved of the utmost aid to the Commander-in-Chief, his uncle Leicester; but was seriously wounded in an engagement with a Spanish troop at Zutphen, and died of his hurt at Arnhem on the 17th of October, 1586.

His importance as the leader of a literary party and a patron of letters is shown by the number of books which were dedicated to him by well-known men of the day—not only Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar*, but Hakluyt's *Voyages* (1582), among others. The Italian philosopher, Giordano Bruno, inscribed two books to him. In fact, his position, at the earliest of ages, was one of the most enviable even in a day when men reaped honours quickly. His own contribution to literature is small, and chiefly belongs, one may suppose, to the year of his exile from Court. The prose romance, *Arcadia*, posthumously published, was regarded, in his own age, as a perfect manual of courtesy and refined ingenuity; and is certainly one of the most interesting monuments of Elizabethan literature, containing as it does so many obligations to the foreign pastoral writers and early Italian novelists, and furnishing so many more to the great school of dramatists immediately subsequent. Sidney's most thorough critics agree that his romance was founded upon the study of the *Arcadia* (1504) of the Neapolitan Sannazzaro, and the *Diana Enamorada* (1542) of the Portuguese Jorge de Montemayor, and therefore may be traced back to the parentage of Boccaccio. The pastoral note suggested by the title is not, however, indicative of the whole spirit of the romance, which, as one might expect from the typical courtier of his day, is full of incidents of quite another complexion. Amid the idyllic scenery of *Arcadia* and the political circumstances of the Spartan commonwealth we have chivalrous knights and pages and tournaments; and if, on the one hand, Sidney was indebted to the pastoral writers, his whole education, on the other, had been modelled upon that famous manual of gentlemanlike accomplishments, the *Cortegiano* of the Milanese Castiglione. In the style of the *Arcadia* there is a perpetual trace of the love of antithesis and the other modish affectations of the day which Shakespeare laughed out of fashion; but although Sidney was closely connected with pedants like Harvey, of whom it is impossible to say much good, his literary position was in strong contrast to the prevailing Euphuism of the age. His prose and poetry

Literary importance of Sidney.

The "Arcadia" (1590).

are artificial and Italianised, but their faults are their own, and they are not given over to those ingenious and far-fetched conceits which, much about the same time, made their appearance in England under Lyly and in Spain under Guevara and Luis de Gongora. In the poetry which occurs at regular intervals throughout the *Arcadia* there is perhaps less of the true Sidneian ring than in the one hundred and ten sonnets known as *Astrophel and Stella*. It has ordinarily been supposed that this collection is the result of a real passion which Sidney entertained for Lady Penelope Devereux, the daughter of his friend Lord Essex. This lady married Lord Rich in 1581; in 1604 she was divorced from him and married the Earl of Devonshire. That Lady Rich was the Stella of the sonnets there is no reason to doubt: that Sidney wrote as a despairing lover is quite at variance with the artificial spirit and general mechanism of the poems. They are not a "human document"; they are a brilliant and passionate exercise in sonnet-writing, in which passion never gets the better of art. They display the influence of Petrarch just as the sonnets of Wyatt and Surrey bear its obvious hall-mark; but their skill in the management of words, in the dressing of simple and even commonplace thoughts in a striking garb, is far more profound; they stand midway between the first efforts of those early sonneteers and the perfection of Shakespeare, side by side with the not dissimilar *Amoretti* of Spenser. Beside these works Sidney wrote the small but important *Apology for Poetry*, posthumously published in 1595, and known from 1598 as the *Defence of Poesy*, in which he strove to show that the pleasures to be derived from imaginative literature are powerful aids, not only to the acquisition of knowledge, but to the cultivation of virtue. This book was intended as a temperate reply to the fanatical opponents of poetry and the drama, and more especially as a rebuke to Stephen Gosson, who had dedicated his *School of Abuse* (1579) to Sidney. The moral tone of all his work was in accordance with his spirit of practical chivalry.

Sidney's sonnets.

§ 10. Spenser and Sidney are at the head of their epoch. Of the younger men, the more immediate contemporaries of Shakespeare, whose lives and work extend into the reign of James I, there is rather less to say. None of them attain the highest rank, and yet the body of work which they produced is scholarly and dignified, and marked by a charming lyric skill.

The Jacobean poets.

(i.) SAMUEL DANIEL belonged to the Sidneian literary clique. He was born, it is probable, near Taunton, was educated at Magdalen Hall, Oxford, and, in process of time, found patrons and was well received at Court. From 1599 till his death in 1619 he is said, without much foundation, to have succeeded to Spenser's pension as royal poet, a position which at this time was not

SAMUEL DANIEL (1562–1619).

strictly official; he wrote masques for performance at Court, and held certain sinecures under James I and Anne of Denmark. He died at Beckington, near Frome Selwood, in 1619. His life was therefore very tranquil and happy, and he had the good fortune to join to his talents a regularity of conduct which was, in the poets and playwrights of those days, sufficiently rare, and must have won him general respect. His writings are tolerably voluminous, and their vigour of thought and dignified evenness of expression, with their debt to classical reading and to the Italianism of Sidney and Spenser, gives them their peculiar rarity of flavour. Daniel's most celebrated work was his *History of the Civil Wars*, which appeared at intervals from 1595 to 1609, and is a historical poem dealing with the Wars of the Roses, in the motley style of narrative and moral meditation brought into fashion by *The Mirror for Magistrates*. Daniel's poem is in eight books, and is written in eight-line stanzas. As might be expected, his talents struggle in vain against the prosaic nature of his subject; for he clings closely to the facts of history, and his attempts at enlivening them are few and far between, although he is not without his moments of pathos and vigorous description. His language is extraordinarily clear, pure, and intelligible; and, considering the tendency of the school to which he belonged, conveys a suggestion of genius. A very notable instance of this is seen in the lyric called *Ulysses and the Siren* (1605), with which Percy's *Reliques* made people familiar long before Daniel's place in literature was rediscovered. The first collected edition which bore the title of his works was published in 1601; but, in 1592, his book of sonnets, called *Delia*, had appeared, marking his connection with the regular school of sonneteers. In 1594, his first tragedy, *Cleopatra*, came out, and, eleven years later, was followed by another, *Philotas*; these are of the grave Senecan order, like Lord Brooke's *Mustapha* and *Alaham*. Among his other works, one may mention the historical poem called *The Complaint of Rosamond* (1592), his prose *Defence of Rhyme* (1602), and *History of England* (1612–17), and his various masques. Altogether, he must be reckoned among the most accomplished writers of his age.

(ii.) There is some similarity between the work of Daniel and that of MICHAEL DRAYTON, who was born at Hartshill in Warwickshire, and is buried in Westminster Abbey. Very little is known of him beyond the voluminous work which he left behind. His longest and most celebrated productions were the topographical and descriptive poem called *Polyolbion* (1613–22), in thirty cantos, which was the work of his later life; the historical poem of *The Barons' Wars* (1603), originally called by the outlandish name of *Mortimeriàdos* (1596); *England's Heroical Epistles* (1597); the famous ballad of *The Battle of Agincourt*, first published in the *Poems* of 1605; *The Muses' Elysium* (1630);

MICHAEL DRAYTON (1563–1631).

and the fairy fancies of *Nymphidia* (1627). In 1593 he brought out a book of pastorals called *Idea, or The Shepherd's Garland*, and in 1594 an *Idea's Mirror*, containing that tribute to the sonnet-form without which no Elizabethan poet's work could be complete. His masterpiece is, without doubt, *Polyolbion*, which is a minute poetical itinerary of England and Wales. Drayton's affectionate patriotism has thus enumerated—county by county, village by village, hill by hill, and rivulet by rivulet—the whole surface of his native land, enlivening his work as he goes along with immense stores of picturesque legend and the richest profusion of allegory. The poem is composed in the long-rhymed verse of twelve syllables, and is, in its design and execution, absolutely unique in literature. The notes attached to this work, in which Drayton was assisted by Selden, "that gulf of learning," are a wonderful mass of curious erudition. Drayton has described the country with the painful accuracy of the topographer and the enthusiasm of the poet; and the *Polyolbion* must ever remain a monument of industry, and, in spite of its obvious drawbacks, of poetical skill.

The "Polyolbion."

The Barons' Wars may be favourably compared with Daniel's poem on the Wars of the Roses. It is written in the eight-lined stanza of Ariosto, which Drayton, in his preface, selects as the most perfect and harmonious. The result cannot be said to be of overwhelming interest; but its merits and defects, side by side with those of Daniel's production, are rather to Drayton's advantage. The period treated is the reign of Edward II. The *Heroical Epistles* are supposed to be written by illustrious and unfortunate personages in English history to the objects of their love. They are therefore a kind of adaptation of Ovid's plan in the *Heroides*, and naturally take the reader's mind forward to Pope's *Eloisa to Abelard*. Drayton's pastoral poetry is very little inferior to that of any of his contemporaries, not even excepting Spenser himself; while, in his fairy poems, he has never been surpassed. In the series entitled *The Muses' Elysium*, consisting of a series of nine idylls, or, to use his own word, *Nymphals*, and above all, in the exquisite little mock-heroic poem of *Nymphidia*, everything that is most delicate, quaint, and fantastic in fairy mythology—a form of superstition very characteristic of Great Britain—is accumulated and handled with a consummate felicity. The whole poem of *Nymphidia* is a gem, and is almost equalled by the *Epithalamion*, in the eighth Nymphal, on the marriage of "our Tita to a noble Fay." It is interesting to trace the use made of these graceful superstitions in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Shakespeare was a native of Drayton's county.

Drayton's other work.

(iii.) A good example of the vigour and versatility of the age, founded on solid and extensive acquirements, is to be found in

the poems of SIR JOHN DAVIES, a learned lawyer and statesman, and Attorney General for Ireland. He has left two works of unusual merit and originality, on subjects apparently so widely different that their juxtaposition looks like a ludicrous paradox. The subject of one of these, *Nosce Teipsum* (1599), is the immortality of the soul; of the other, *Orchestra* (1594), the art of dancing—not, indeed, the frivolous science of the jig and coranto, but the rhythmical standard to which all the motions of our life, in Davies' opinion, should be adjusted. Davies' style was pure and masculine; his versification was graceful and melodious; and considering the nature of its subject, *Nosce Teipsum* is really a very successful poem. *Orchestra*, in its turn, is dignified by a singular amount of learned and classical allusions. Hallam gave great praise to the *Nosce Teipsum*. "Very few," he said, "have been able to preserve a perspicuous brevity without stiffness or pedantry (allowance made for the subject and the times) in metaphysical reasoning, so successfully as Sir John Davies." The metre of the poem is the four-lined heroic stanza, which was afterwards adopted by Sir William D'Avenant for his *Gondibert*, and borrowed in turn by Dryden for the *Annus Mirabilis*. The *Orchestra* is composed in a peculiarly constructed stanza of seven lines, extremely well adapted to express the ever-varying rhythm of those dancing movements which, by a thousand ingenious analogies, the poet traces through all nature. Davies also wrote a series of acrostics in honour of Elizabeth which he called *Astræa*, and a book called *A Discovery of the Causes of the Irish Discontent* (1612), dealing with a subject which he was peculiarly fitted to handle.

SIR JOHN DAVIES (1569?–1626).

"Nosce Teipsum" and "Orchestra."

(iv.) The general admiration of his contemporaries placed the genius of JOHN DONNE, Dean of St. Paul's, in one of the foremost places among the men of letters of his day. Modern criticism, however, has so many different opinions to give on the subject, and Donne's modern admirers have said so much of him that is extravagant, that a little depreciation is perhaps justifiable. The true story of his life and the strange paradox of his character, which was unsuspected by his biographer, Izaak Walton, have been at length revealed (1899) by the efforts of Mr. Edmund Gosse and Dr. Jessopp. In his youth Donne was remarkable for his wit and gaiety; he seems to have embraced several professions, and to have drunk deeply of pleasure. His extraordinary accomplishments made him another Pico della Mirandola or Admirable Crichton. When entering upon his career in the public service, as secretary to the Lord Keeper Egerton, he made a secret marriage with a lady whom he had long ardently loved, a daughter of Sir George More and niece of Lady Egerton. The violent displeasure of her family afterwards involved him in serious persecution. In later life,

JOHN DONNE (1573–1631).

under the influence of deep religious conviction, he took Holy Orders (1615), and, as Dean of St. Paul's (1621), became as remarkable for his intense piety as he had been for his gallantries and escapades. His writings are very voluminous, and consist of love-verses, epigrams, elegies, and of those satires on which, in spite of the declarations of his more intimate admirers, his fame is chiefly built. His sermons, with their heightened, ponderous style, their long periods, and their wealth of intricate allusion, are as remarkable, in their way, as his poetry. As an amatory poet, although his imagination is voluptuous and even sensual, Donne has very rightly been placed by Johnson among those poets whom he calls *metaphysical*—writers, that is to say, in whom the intellectual faculty obtains an enormous supremacy over sentiment and feeling. Donne is always on the watch for unexpected and ingenious analogies; an idea is racked into every conceivable distortion; the most remote comparisons are discovered; the most obscure recesses of historical and scientific allusion are ransacked to furnish —sometimes only to shadow forth—illustrations which no reader could possibly suggest to himself. The effect of all this upon the reader is curious: he is at once astonished and, at the same time, ashamed to see these strained postures —the clever but puerile conjuror's antics. It is evident that, in this cultivation of all that is odd, unexpected, and unnatural, the poet becomes perfectly indifferent to the natural graces of emotion in its more simple forms; and, in his incessant search after epigrammatic turns of thought, cares very little whether reason, taste, and propriety be violated or not. Donne's versification is singularly harsh and tuneless; his command of form is very slight; and the contrast between the far-fetched ingenuity of his thought and the ruggedness with which he expresses it adds to the peculiarity of the effect upon the mind of the reader. Nevertheless, there are passages in which a single phrase of two or three words redeems a vast amount of obscurity and conceit, and justifies for the moment that hyperbolic admiration which these poems have received. In Donne's seven *Satires* and his *Epistles* to his friends we naturally find less of this portentous employment of intellect to a rather insignificant end, for the nature of satires and epistles implies that they are written in a more easy and colloquial strain; and Donne occasionally, and happily, adapted the suggestions of Persius, his chief model, to the manners of his own time and country. His works were not published, so far as we know, till 1633, but they found, in after times, many admirers; and, even before our own century developed a certain enthusiasm for the lyric Dean, Pope had translated some of the satires into the elegant language of his own time, under the somewhat invidious title of "The Satires of Dr. John Donne, Dean of St. Paul's, versified."

Donne's style.

(v.) The Latin models of satire, which were to be applied immortally to English verse by Dryden and Pope, were first adopted —at least in print—by the eminent JOSEPH HALL, Bishop of Norwich. This very distinguished ornament of early Puritan theology was born at Bristow Park, near Ashby-de-la-Zouch. He became a fellow of the Puritan college of Emmanuel at Cambridge, then very recently founded, and, taking Holy Orders, became, in process of time, a canon in St. Peter's church at Wolverhampton. He held in succession the sees of Exeter (1627) and Norwich (1641), and, as a prelate, was remarkable for his learning, dignity, and piety. He was a member of the Synod of Dort, and, in his general theological attitude, was opposed to the Laudian school of thought; but, politically, he held to the King's side, and was, in consequence, deprived of his see. The heroic resignation with which he supported poverty and persecution is a matter of history. He died during the Commonwealth in the suburbs of Norwich. With his theological work, which belongs to the Caroline period of literature, and is somewhat bald in its style, we have here nothing to do. His satires are the work of a very young man, and definitely belong to the Elizabethan era, having been written while he was a student at Cambridge. They form a complete collection of six books, under the title *Virgidemiarum* (*i.e.* a harvest or collection of rods, modified from the similar term *Vindemiarum*, *i.e.* vintage). They were not, however, all published at the same time. The first three books, quaintly entitled by their author *Toothless Satires*, appeared in 1597; the other three, designated *Biting Satires*, a year later. Some of them attack the vices and affectations of literature, while others are of a more general moral application. They are certainly very clever and vivacious; but Hall dealt his blows rather too liberally and, for so young a man, with inordinate presumption. As curious pictures of the manners and society of the day, they are very interesting in themselves, and throw frequent light upon obscure passages of contemporary drama. Hall, whose chief model, like Donne's and Marston's, was Persius, often employs a peculiar artifice which gives additional force to the piquancy of his satire—viz. by making his secondary allusions or illustrations themselves satirical. Some of these satires are extremely short, occasionally consisting of only a few lines. Hall's versification is always easy and often elegant; his style is at once concise and conversational, and is more readable than Donne's. Hall's work should be compared with the inferior satires of the dramatist John Marston, of whom we shall say something in a succeeding chapter.

Bishop Hall (1574–1656).

Hall's satires.

§ 11. Space will permit only a rapid allusion to two admirable secondary poets of this vigorous and variously endowed era. PHINEAS FLETCHER (1582–1650) and GILES FLETCHER (d. 1623) were brothers, both Cam-

Phineas *and* Giles Fletcher.

bridge men, and both in Holy Orders. Giles was at Trinity College, and held the living of Alderton in Suffolk; Phineas was at King's College, and was rector of Hilgay, near Downham Market. Both were followers and imitators of the great master of allegory, Spenser, and in the work of both we see traces of Spenser's rich and musical diction as well as of his lofty and philosophical tone. Giles' work is a poem in four cantos, called *Christ's Victory and Triumph* (1610): Phineas produced a far more curious poem called *The Purple Island* (1633), a minute description of the human body, with all its anatomical details, followed by an equally searching delineation of the intellectual faculties. The names of the Fletchers are only two out of many, and a short account of some of the lesser poets will be found in the notes immediately following. It is difficult to select from the poetry of an age which was instinct with poetry of the highest kind—an age whose study to the literary student is a revelation of inexhaustible wonders.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

A.—*THE MIRROR FOR MAGISTRATES* (1559).

The history of this work, which is the most important poem in English literature between Surrey and Spenser and was very popular in its day, deserves a few words. Lydgate's *Falls of Princes* was in great demand down to the end of Mary's reign, not because of its literary merits, but as a manual of history and morality; and *The Mirror for Magistrates* was projected to supply a similar series of stories from English history, which Lydgate's original, Boccaccio, had neglected. The idea was probably the publisher's: the editor seems to have been WILLIAM BALDWIN, an Oxford man, who, in 1549, had dedicated a metrical version of Solomon's Song to Edward VI, and had been stage-manager of the Court interludes. Baldwin, about 1557, brought together a group of poets for his work, the chief of whom was THOMAS SACKVILLE, afterwards Lord Buckhurst. We have already said something of the part which this illustrious person took in the *Mirror*; his work so eminently constitutes the value of the book from its purely literary side, that subsequent editors have, with no sufficient reason, assigned the idea of the work to him. The publication of the poems was for some time hindered by the Chancellor, Bishop Gardiner, who appears, as censor, to have seen some danger hidden in Sackville's contribution, and so the first edition did not appear till 1559. Sackville's poems were not included in this. Baldwin wove a kind of framework round the stories, representing the shades of the unfortunate celebrities as complaining to the poet, and each story thus forms part of a whole. His chief helper was GEORGE FERRERS (d. 1579), a Cambridge Bachelor of Law and then member of Parliament for Brackley, who had been, like Baldwin, a stage-manager at Court entertainments, and was Lord of Misrule at the royal revels held at Greenwich in 1553. The other poets were four in number, the best known among them being Phaër, the translator of Virgil. The material of the stories was taken chiefly from the newly published chronicles of Fabyan and Hall; and the wars of York and Lancaster were the chief resource of the poets.

In 1563, when the danger of another prohibition seemed unlikely, Baldwin brought out a second and

much augmented edition, to which Sackville's *Induction* was prefixed. This, describing the poet's descent into Hell under the conduct of Sorrow, gives a motive to the story which knits the poems together. *The Complaint of the Duke of Buckingham* appeared also in this, and, among the other poets who put their hand to the work, we may mention Thomas Churchyard. The design did not stop with this edition; another appeared in 1571, and, in 1574, JOHN HIGGINS, an Oxford man who had compiled some school-books, wrote an entirely new series of stories, beginning with Albanact, the younger son of Brutus and first king of Albanie, or Scotland, and going down to the Emperor Caracalla. Higgins' performance had an induction of its own in the octave stanza: its most striking feature is the story of Lear's youngest daughter, Cordelia. In 1587 the *Mirror* assumed its final form by the union of Higgins' series of narratives, to which twenty-three more were added, with Baldwin's; but it was yet again to be recast (1610) with new additions by an insufficient and misleading editor, RICHARD NICCOLS (1584–1616). It continued to enjoy great popularity until it was superseded by a new poetical chronicle, entitled *Albion's England*, which had been first published in 1586.

The Mirror for Magistrates was a grave and moral work, fraught, in a very disturbed order of things, with lessons to princes; and the writers, especially Sackville, the author of a very severe and elevated tragedy, took themselves very seriously. They were the last of the poets whom Boccaccio's lesson on the fleeting nature of human prosperity moved deeply; they were, in short, moralists before they were poets. The literary importance, then, of *The Mirror for Magistrates* is that it is the last word of the Chaucerian school. At the same time, as Warton says, its publication "enriched the stores, and extended the limits of our drama. These lives are so many tragical speeches in character. They suggested scenes to Shakespeare. Some critics imagine that Historical Plays owed their origin to this collection. At least it is certain that the writers of this *Mirror* were the first who made a poetical use of the English chronicles recently compiled . . . which opened a new field of subjects and events, and . . . produced a great revolution in the state of popular knowledge." One may, without much difficulty, trace the genealogy of Shakespeare's great tragedy of the houses of York and Lancaster, from its groundwork in the three parts of *Henry VI.*, through the intermediate stage of *The True History of the Contention*, back to its source in *The Mirror for Magistrates.*

B.—MINOR POETS OF THE ELIZABETHAN PERIOD.

It is impossible to give any accurate classification of the innumerable poets who flourished during the reigns of "Eliza and our James." "It was said by Ellis," remarks Hallam, "that nearly one hundred names of poets belonging to the reign of Elizabeth might be enumerated, besides many that have left no memorial except their songs. This however was but a moderate computation. Drake (*Shakespeare and his Times*, i. 674) has made a list of more than two hundred," and, in the present activity of Elizabethan studies, new names are constantly being unearthed.

(1.) *The Miscellanies.*

Some of the most valuable work of the lesser poets may be gathered from the numerous miscellaneous collections of the age. We spoke of Tottel's Miscellany in the notes to the last chapter. None of the succeeding miscellanies can compare with it: the poets who figure in them rose only here and there to the high level of lyric poetry. But the fact that they were from time to time thus inspired, so that even the dullest of them, if only by a single song, left his mark upon English literature, is one of the distinguishing features of this greatest of all literary periods.

1576.—The first Miscellany to follow Tottel's was *The Paradise of Dainty Devices*, published by the printer Disle. Sir Egerton Brydges, who edited it for *The British Biographer*, said, "In the subject of these poems there is too little variety, as they deal very generally in the commonplaces of ethics, such as the fickleness and caprices of love, the falsehood and instability of friendship, and the vanity of all human pleasures. But many of these are often expressed with a vigour that would do credit to any era." But, while the poems are grave and didactic, the lyric influence of Surrey and Wyatt, with all that that influence included, is to be seen in them. The chief contributor, and, it may be, the chief person consulted as to the framing of this collection—although it did not appear till ten years after his death—was RICHARD EDWARDS (*circ.* 1523–1566), a Somerset man, educated at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and, in 1561, appointed Master of the Children of the Royal Chapel. He was a poor poet, and his reputation is perhaps more intimately connected with the growth of the drama (see p. 155); but in *The Paradise of Dainty Devices*, we find one song of his, *Amantium Iræ*—"The falling-out of faithful friends renewing is of love"—which is one of the most lovely of English lyrics. Some poems by Lord Vaux, who, it will be remembered, had been represented in Tottel's collection, were inserted in this anthology: he wrote in a grave and religious vein, for the unstable nature of human desires seems to have impressed him much, as it impressed Sackville and the other authors of *The Mirror for Magistrates*. The writer who holds the third place in this Miscellany is WILLIAM HUNNIS, (d. 1597), a gentleman of the Chapel Royal, and the author of some moral and religious poems printed separately and at various times.

A fourth writer, who, in the *Paradise*, is reflective and devotional, is EDWARD DE VERE, Earl of Oxford (1550–1604), a desultory poet and epigrammatist. He was, as has been mentioned in the text, a literary arbiter at Court, and headed a clique in opposition to the Earl of Leicester and Sir Philip Sidney. He sat as special commissioner among the judges of Mary Queen of Scots.

1578.—*The Gorgeous Gallery of Gallant Inventions*, which was collected by one THOMAS PROCTOR, is, for the most part, an affected experiment in alliteration, with hardly a redeeming feature. Yet, even here, we find the original version of the song, "Willow, willow," which forms the keynote of not the least pathetic scene in Shakespeare.

1584. — CLEMENT ROBINSON'S Miscellany, *A Handful of Pleasant Delights*, is, like the *Gorgeous Gallery*, an essay in Euphuism. Between these two had appeared Lyly's two romances of *Euphues*; and, consequently, in this and succeeding Miscellanies, we trace the development of a new influence in poetry.

1593.—*The Phœnix Nest*, edited by R. S. of the Inner Temple, may be bracketed with—

1600.—*England's Helicon*, a Miscellany of pastoral poetry, planned by JOHN BODENHAM, and edited by an anonymous "A. B."

Both these last are, in their style and general authorship, very similar. NICHOLAS BRETON (1545?–1626?), whose work appears in both, was a very voluminous author. His work, extending over a long period, from about 1577 to 1626, shows the trace of almost every literary influence of the Elizabethan age, from the Italianism of Surrey to the religious enthusiasm which reached its high-water mark in Crashaw. He was a friend of Sidney, and composed an elegy, *Amoris Lachrimæ*, upon him. His own best poem is pastoral, and bears the not very original title of *The Passionate Shepherd* (1604).

THOMAS LODGE (d. 1625) was, like Breton, represented in both books. His father had been Lord Mayor of London; he himself was at Merchant Taylors' School and Trinity College, Oxford. Hardly any writer of the age was so thorough a devotee of miscellaneous literature. He wrote voluminously between 1579 and 1596—as dramatist, poet, pam-

phleteer, and Euphuistic novelist. Ten of his poems are contained in *England's Helicon*, and other songs and madrigals are scattered throughout his romances. He had a great sense of style, and his affectations, although remarkable, are too well meditated to be ridiculous. As a novelist, he has the honour of having given, in his *Rosalynde: Euphues' Golden Legacy* (1590), the plot of *As you Like It* to Shakespeare; and takes rank on his own account among the founders of English prose fiction. His dramatic work is by no means conspicuous; but it is interesting to note that he was Greene's partner in *A Looking-Glass for London* (1594).

Among the remaining writers who are represented in *England's Helicon*, are Barnfield, Sidney, and Robert Greene. But probably the most celebrated poems in the collection are Marlowe's pastoral invitation, "Come live with me and be my love," and the matter-of-fact rejoinder attributed to Ralegh.

1600.—*England's Parnassus*, edited by R. A.—of this custom of anonymity the dedication of Shakespeare's *Sonnets* is an example which will occur to everyone—was, for the most part, not a Miscellany of original poetry, but a selection from the poems of the best authors of the time. R. A. is generally supposed to be one ROBERT ALLOTT.

1602.—The last important Miscellany is the *Poetical Rhapsody*, which was edited by FRANCIS DAVISON (1575?–1618?), son of the Secretary, William Davison. He himself contributed to it, and his fellow-writers were mostly courtiers like himself, representing the school of Sidney. Sidney, who had been dead for sixteen years, is represented by two pastorals: but, of the poets alive at the time, the most illustrious is SIR EDWARD DYER (d. 1607), a Somerset man, and a sometime student at Oxford, who had a rather chequered career at Court. His poetry is scanty, and consists of a number of detached lyrics, of which the best known is the splendid, "My mind to me a kingdom is," first published in 1588. SIR HENRY WOTTON (1568–1639), whose diplomatic career lasted for many years, also appears among Davison's band of poets. Wotton was a very reputable scholar, but his literary lustre is chiefly reflected from his associates, and from the life which Izaak Walton prefixed to the *Reliquiæ Wottonianæ* (1651). Towards the end of his life he became Provost of Eton, and took deacon's orders. Beside the poems and prose in the *Reliquiæ*, he wrote a book on the *Elements of Architecture*, which was long held in great esteem.

The student who is desirous of gaining a nearer acquaintance with the Elizabethan lyric should refer to Collier's *Seven English Miscellanies* (1867) and Mr. A. H. Bullen's collections of *Lyrics from Elizabethan Song-Books*.

(2.) *The Sonneteers.*

The English Sonnet demands a place to itself in any history of English literature, not only because it represents a peculiar and important division of poetical writing, but because almost every great poet of the day strove to attain special excellence as a sonnet-writer; because it was chiefly through the sonnets of Wyatt and Surrey that the spirit of the Italian Renaissance entered English poetry; and because this branch of art culminates in the finest flower of Elizabethan verse, the *Sonnets* of Shakespeare. We have already referred to many of these books of sonnets, and it will be best, for our purpose here, to give a chronological list of them, adding short biographical notes where the authors have not been mentioned already.

1557.—The bulk of Wyatt's and Surrey's sonnets appeared in Tottel's Miscellany.

1582.—THOMAS WATSON (*circ.* 1557–1592) brought out a collection of sonnets, the *Hecatompathia, or Passionate Century of Love*, which he dedicated to Lord Oxford. Watson was an Oxford scholar of much learning, and prefixed to each of his sonnets a quaint and pedantic prose

commentary, in which he candidly indicates the source from which he has derived (and borrowed) his inspiration. Watson has received some harsh criticism because his sonnets are so obviously exercises in metre rather than the fruits of passion. In spite, however, of a rare crudity and affectation, Watson's collection is not to be despised. The sonnets are to be attributed, not so much to the imitation of Wyatt and Surrey, as to Watson's own devotion to Petrarch, whom he had translated into Latin a few years before, and to a very wide acquaintance with Latin, Greek, and Italian poets. The passion of sonneteers cannot always be proved to be genuine, and, on this count, Watson may be acquitted from blame. He need not, on the other hand, have taken such pains to be artificial. In 1593, soon after his death, another volume of sonnets, which he had already circulated in manuscript, was brought out. This, *The Tears of Fancy*, although boasting no originality, is, as Professor Saintsbury points out (*Hist. of Eliz. Literature*, p. 107), indebted at least to Sidney, whose sonnets had appeared since the *Hecatompathia*.

1591.—The real inauguration of the Elizabethan sonnet is SIR PHILIP SIDNEY'S *Astrophel and Stella*, containing 108 poems (see p. 100). This was followed immediately by a tremendous crop of sonnet-books.

1592.—The great sonnet-book of this year was the first edition of SAMUEL DANIEL'S *Delia*[2] (see p. 101), the first of the long series of books called by the fictitious name of the poet's mistress—if he really had one. A more complete edition was published in 1594.

In the end of 1592 HENRY CONSTABLE'S (1562–1613) *Diana* appeared for the first time as the nucleus of a book full of miscellaneous and anonymous sonnets. The complete edition of *Diana*, like that of *Delia*, belongs to 1594. Constable was the son of Sir Robert Constable of Newark, and was a member of St. John's College, Cambridge. He was deeply engaged in the numerous plots which were formed during Elizabeth's reign to restore England to the Roman obedience, and, in James I's time, his zeal landed him in the Tower. His sonnet work is augmented by a series addressed to noble ladies who admired his poems, and by sixteen *Spiritual Sonnets to the Honour of God and His Saints*; these were not, however, published till the present century.

1593.—BARNABE BARNES' (1569?–1609) *Parthenophil and Parthenophe*. Of the author little is known save that his father was Richard Barnes, Bishop of Durham, that he was for some time at Brasenose College, Oxford, and that in 1591 he was in Normandy with Essex. As a member of Gabriel Harvey's clique, he dealt unduly in hyperbolical mannerisms, and was able to descend to sheer nonsense. But he was capable also of excellent poetry in a hypersensuous vein, and few sonneteers, short of Shakespeare, gave so much life and energy to their verse. Like so many other poets at the end of the sixteenth century, he turned his attention to religious verse, and, in 1595, published his *Divine Century of Spiritual Sonnets*, which he dedicated to Tobias Matthew, then recently appointed Bishop of Durham and afterwards Archbishop of York.

The *Licia* of GILES FLETCHER (1549?–1611), the father of Phineas and Giles Fletcher (see p. 105), followed a few months later, and the *Phillis* of THOMAS LODGE (see above, under the "Miscellanies"), a remarkable and excellent book of sonnets, belongs also to this year.

1594.—In addition to the definitive editions of *Delia* and *Diana*, this year saw the appearance of Drayton's *Idea's Mirror*, a sequel to *Idea* (1593) (see p. 102). WILLIAM PERCY'S (1575–1648) *Cælia* appears, from internal evidence and what we know of its author, a son of Lord Northumberland, to have been written in admiring emulation of Barnabe Barnes. The anonymous *Zepheria*, of the same year, betrays a considerable debt to foreign sonneteers. And in 1594, too, the grave George Chapman (see Ch. VIII), for whom love had

few charms, published ten sonnets to no less a mistress than Philosophy.

1595.—RICHARD BARNFIELD (1574-1627), a member of Brasenose College, Oxford, and a country squire at Dorlestone in Staffordshire, published his poem *Cynthia* in this year, and added to it twenty sonnets to Ganymede, whose subject reminds one of the earlier portion of Shakespeare's Sonnets. Barnfield is best known as the author of "As it fell upon a day," which is part of the pseudo-Shakespearean cycle of songs and sonnets called *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1599). The poem was reprinted in *England's Helicon* under the signature "Ignoto."

The remaining sonnets of 1595 are Spenser's *Amoretti*, and the anonymous books called *Emaricdulfe* (by E. C.) and *Alcilia* (by J. C.) *Alcilia* contains sonnets which have a merely nominal claim to the title; but the word "sonnet" was freely used at this time, and was applied by Lord Vaux as a sub-title to his "I lothe that I did love," which is a very distant cousin to the sonnet. 1595, according to Mr. Sidney Lee (*Life of Shakespeare*, p. 436), is the probable year of Sir John Davies' nine "Gulling sonnets," in which the current type of sonnet is ridiculed. These were not published. For other details of Sir John, see p. 103.

1596.—BARTHOLOMEW GRIFFIN, RICHARD LYNCH, and WILLIAM SMITH, all three obscure and well-nigh dateless poets, came forward respectively with *Fidessa*, *Diella*, and *Chloris*. There is little to be said to the praise of these be-sonneted ladies, whose generation was now growing a little old. ROBERT TOFTE'S (d. 1620) *Laura*, of 1597, almost exhausts the series. A few belated volumes followed, chief among which are the *Aurora* (1637) of SIR WILLIAM ALEXANDER, and the *Cælica* of SIR FULKE GREVILLE (see p. 248). The date of publication of these is, however, no clue to their date of authorship. Spenser, for example, had written his sonnets long before they appeared; and Shakespeare's were not published till 1609.

This short chronicle by no means exhausts the tale of Elizabethan sonnet writers. Their name is legion, and they wrote upon all manner of subjects other than the merely factitious subject of love. In bringing their names together, I have largely availed myself of the appendix to Mr. Sidney Lee's recently published *Life of Shakespeare*. Mr. Lee has gone, more thoroughly than any previous writer, into the question of the influence which was exercised by contemporary French sonneteers on these writers. The French sonnet has, indeed, the start of its English sister, and the great name of Ronsard (1524-1585), to say nothing of his prolific friends and followers, has doubtless a place in the vocabulary of our sonneteers; but the quickening force of the sonnet and the moulder of its spirit, apart from its form, is Petrarch. The sonnet, more vitally than anything else, displays the Italian side of Elizabethan art.

(3.) *The Translators.*

If the sonnet and lyric forms of poetry represent the chief original activity of our literature in Elizabeth's reign, it must be kept in mind—and we have already hinted—that the strongest of all influences which made themselves felt on the age came from the revived study of the classics. The reign of Henry VIII, with its princely bishops and statesmen, had given the necessary impetus to learning in England: in that period the energies of the Universities had been directed in their proper road; and a learned class, apart from all ordinary social distinctions, had been formed. The next step lay in the transmission of classical learning to the multitude through the medium of translations. It is not at all surprising to find that almost every year of the century between 1550 and 1650 produced its quota of translations, both in poetry and prose, and that few Latin or Greek authors were, by the end of that time, left untouched. We shall have more to say of the prose translators at the end of the

next chapter, while the greatest of all those who turned their authors into English verse, George Chapman, belongs more properly to the dramatists. While the prose translators were more or less illustrious, the poets were, for the most part, rather insignificant. But three of them had a very distinct influence on the poetry of their age. The study of Virgil had already produced Bishop Douglas' archaic translation and the tentative versions of Surrey. In 1558, THOMAS PHAËR (d. 1560), of whom we know little, save that he was an Oxford man, published a poetical version of seven books of the Æneid. In 1560 he died, having finished nine books, and the work was completed (1573) by THOMAS TWYNE (1543–1613). This translation is a somewhat weary piece of work, and has no suspicion of poetical beauty about it. But its importance lies in the fact that, however roughly or inadequately, it introduced Virgil to the reading public, and supplied new poets with their material. A later translation (1582) of the first four books of the Æneid by RICHARD STANYHURST (1547–1618) deserves mention for the eccentricity of its diction, extravagant and tuneless, yet sometimes not without poetry. Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, a treasure-house of classical fable and allusion, were rendered into English (1567) by ARTHUR GOLDING (1536?–1605?), an uncle by marriage of Edward, Earl of Oxford. However, the most important translation of all, in view of the coming pre-eminence of the drama, was the series of plays taken from Seneca by JASPER HEYWOOD (1535–1598), a son of John Heywood, the writer of interludes (see Ch. VI). Heywood was an Oxford man, and a fellow, first of Merton, then of All Souls'; but, adhering to the Church of Rome, was deprived of his fellowship under Elizabeth, took Holy Orders, became a Jesuit, and, after risking his life in England and being sent to the Tower, died at Naples. His Senecan translations, consisting of three plays, appeared in 1559, 1560, and 1561. Here, again, we have little of real literary value. But the stilted, verbose tragedies of Seneca were the medium through which the great principles of tragic art came to England; and, although their actual literary influence was very transitory, and the Elizabethan tragedy soon escaped from their stiff limitations, we shall nevertheless see, in a subsequent chapter, that their imitation had a definite vogue. It is certainly interesting to note that the date of Sackville and Norton's *Gorboduc*, that most Senecan of English tragedies, is 1561, the year in which Heywood's last translation was published. This implies, not so much the influence of Heywood upon the authors, as the popularity of his work with the public, which would make this far from lively tragedy an acceptable stage-play.

Not less important than these are the group of translators who, flourishing a generation later, made the Italian poets common property. But, while Jasper Heywood and the others aided in building up the great structure of Elizabethan literature, the translators of Ariosto and Tasso only added a supplement to what had been already done. Moreover, while the classical translators reached the people and helped on the popular form of art, the drama, the Italian translators addressed themselves to a more limited audience. Spenser's *Faëry Queen* and Sidney's *Arcadia* were written for cultivated ladies and gentlemen, for nobles and courtiers; and it was to this class that Ariosto and Tasso similarly appealed. The Italian authors who caught the popular ear were, as we shall see, the prose novelists. The Petrarchist sonneteers, no doubt, delighted the educated minority in England: but that all classes alike saw the beauty of Spenser's *Amoretti* or Daniel's *Delia* is impossible. While Phaër's *Virgil* found a large market, there were many translations no better and no worse which found no market at all, and are now forgotten. The inference is obvious. The public readily accepted even inferior translations of the classics: the cultured classes, in demanding

Italian translations, also asked for a measure of form and style with them. Harington's *Ariosto* and Fairfax's *Tasso* are not rough, haphazard versions: they are, by themselves, literary productions, attempts to give a worthy rendering of their original and to fit it to the appreciation of men of taste and learning. Ariosto and Tasso were the Italian poets most in request; their study formed the necessary corollary to the study of Spenser: they were also the most modern of the great Italians. The definitive edition of the *Orlando Furioso* appeared in 1532; the *Gerusalemme Liberata* of Tasso belongs to 1580. As the demand for Petrarch and the general custom of the sonnet grew slack, the popularity of the epic and romantic authors grew. Their influence on Milton, the greatest poet of the seventeenth century—their contribution to the stock of his imagination—is easily seen. One may remark, in this place, that the Elizabethan writers seem to have recognised little in Dante beyond his medievalism: they regarded the *Divine Comedy* as they regarded Westminster Abbey or Lincoln Minster, as an antiquated work of art sadly in need of Renaissance beautifying. The study of Dante, so far as England is concerned, belongs to the nineteenth century.

SIR JOHN HARINGTON (1561–1612) published, in 1591, the earliest translation of the *Orlando Furioso* of Ariosto. His father, the elder John Harington (1534–1582), was the author of some poems published in his son's collection called *Nugæ Antiquæ*, and was imprisoned by Mary in the Tower, for holding correspondence with Elizabeth. Sir John himself was born at Kelston, near Bath. He wrote four books of epigrams and several other works. He was also, as joint executor of Frances Lady Sussex's will, connected with the founding of Sidney Sussex College, in Cambridge. His successor in the path of Italian translation was EDWARD FAIRFAX (d. 1635), a gentleman of fortune, who, in 1600, published a translation of Tasso, with a dedication to Queen Elizabeth. This version shows a distinct advance upon Harington's Ariosto. "It has been considered," says Hallam, "as one of the earliest works, in which the obsolete English, which had not been laid aside in the days of Sackville, and which Spenser affected to preserve, gave way to a style not much differing, at least in point of single words and phrases, from that of the present day." But this praise, he adds, is equally due to Daniel, to Drayton, and to others of the later Elizabethan poets. The first five books of Tasso had been previously (1594) translated by the antiquary RICHARD CAREW (1555–1620). This translation, although more literal than Fairfax's, is far inferior in poetical spirit.

Yet another type of translator is seen in JOSUAH SYLVESTER (1563–1618), a man of Kent, who spent most of his life as a merchant in London, and died at Middelburg, as secretary to the English Merchant Venturers. Sylvester's great work was the translation (1605–6) of the French poet Du Bartas' *Divine Weeks and Works*, one of those inspired poems whose cosmogony is splendid, if uncritical. The original poem, *La Semaine*, and its sequel, *La Seconde Semaine*, had appeared in 1578 and 1584. This version was in great repute for many years: it went through six editions, the last of which was published in 1641: it gained its maker the epithet of "the Silver-Tongued"; and it had a great influence on the subsequent work of Milton. Sylvester also published, in 1599, a series of gratulatory sonnets, forty in number, addressed to Henry IV of France.

(4.) *Other Poets.*

THOMAS CHURCHYARD (1520?–1604) was born at Shrewsbury, and served as a page in Surrey's household, where pages might be expected to develop into poets. Churchyard however, never became a past master of the art. Half his life and more was spent in active service under all the best commanders of the age;

but his enjoyment of warfare seems to have been but slight. Isaac d'Israeli described him as "one of those unfortunate men who have written poetry all their days and lived a long life to complete the misfortune." His temperament was exceptionally gloomy, and there is very little of the cheerful note in his poetry. It may be remembered that he joined in the compilation of *The Mirror for Magistrates*. In most of his subsequent work he adhered to the same stiff, sombre style, introducing an autobiographical element which is sufficiently melancholy. Critics differ considerably about his place among contemporary writers; but the comparative smoothness of his verse cannot compensate for its monotony and lack of humour, or place him above a rather hardly gained position in the second class of Tudor poets.

JOHN DAVIES of Hereford (1565?–1618) was a writing-master and author of miscellaneous verse. His *forte* lay in the sonnet and epigram, but he fancied his own powers in religious allegory very strongly. His best work is to be found in the collections (1610–11) called *Wits' Pilgrimage* and *The Scourge of Folly*. He must not be confounded with the more eminent Sir John Davies, to whom we have alluded in the text.

HUMPHREY GIFFORD, in 1580, published a collection of songs called *A Posy of Gillyflowers*, which has something of value as a very distinct example of the transition from the early Tudor poetry to the full strength of the Elizabethan period. Many of Gifford's poems are semi-religious.

BARNABE GOOGE (1540–1594), who has been credited with a poem in Tottel's Miscellany, was the son of a Recorder of Lincoln, and migrated from Christ's College, Cambridge, to New College, Oxford. His reputation is, of course, similar to that of Turbervile, Gascoigne, and other pioneers of Elizabethan poetry. He entered the household of Sir William Cecil, afterwards Lord Burghley. His chief work is the *Eclogues, Epitaphs, and Sonnets*, of 1563, which is a considerable addition to English pastoral poetry. He also, like many of his friends, was a translator, choosing for his effort (1560–5) a Latin satire by Pier Angelo Manzoli (Marcellus Palingenius), known as *The Zodiac of Life*. Dr. Courthope notes: "The matter of his fifth and sixth eclogues is borrowed from the *Diana Enamorada* of Montemayor, which he had doubtless read during his travels in Spain; and, as far as I know, this is the first trace of the influence of Spanish romance on English poetry." Sidney, as we have seen, was indebted to Montemayor for a certain amount of his *Arcadia*.

SAMUEL ROWLANDS (1570?–1630) was a prolific pamphleteer during the late Tudor and the Stewart epoch. "His descriptions of contemporary follies," said the poet Campbell, "have considerable humour. I think he has afforded in the story of Smug and Smith a hint to Butler" —the author of *Hudibras*—"for his apologue of vicarious justice, in the case of the brethren who hanged a 'poor weaver that was bedrid,' instead of the cobbler who had killed an Indian—

> "'Not out of malice, but mere zeal,
> Because he was an Infidel.'"

ROBERT SOUTHWELL (1561?–1595) was born at Horsham St. Faith's in Norfolk, was educated at Douai, where he joined the Society of Jesus and took Holy Orders, and returned to England as a missionary in 1586. He was arrested in 1592 and executed at Tyburn in 1595, not as an accomplice in any plot, but simply as a priest of the Roman Church. His poems have a wonderful beauty of religious thought and expression, and Ben Jonson said of the famous *Burning Babe*, that Southwell "had so written that piece of his, that he (Jonson) would have been content to destroy many of his." Southwell bears some resemblance to the other great and gentle Romanist poet, Richard Crashaw.

WILLIAM WARNER (1558?–1609) was a native of London, an attorney of the Common Pleas, and the author of *Albion's England*, first

printed in 1586, and frequently reprinted. This poem, written in the fourteen-syllable line, is a history of England from the Deluge to the reign of James I. It supplanted *The Mirror for Magistrates* in popular favour. The style of the work was much admired in its day, and Meres, in his *Wit's Treasury*, says that by Warner's pen the English tongue was "mightily enriched and gorgeously invested in rare ornaments and splendid habiliments." The tales are chiefly of a "merry" cast, and the work altogether furnishes a great contrast to *The Mirror for Magistrates*.

(5.) *Scottish Poets.*

Although the two most important Scottish poets of the Elizabethan period belong, in point of time, to a later period, and were more nearly the contemporaries of Wither, Herrick, and Crashaw than of Spenser and Sidney, their chief work, nevertheless, consists of sonnets, and may therefore be referred to the epoch under discussion. SIR WILLIAM ALEXANDER, EARL OF STIRLING (1567?–1640), published in 1637 a collection of works, called *Recreations of the Muses*. This contained an heroic poem called *Doomsday*, four tragedies founded on grave and royal themes, and a book of sonnets entitled *Aurora*. The fact that, so late in history, a poet should have thought it worth while to revive the Senecan form of tragedy is a proof of the way in which Scotland followed English fashions at a distance.

The sonnets of WILLIAM DRUMMOND of Hawthornden (1585–1649), a son of Sir John Drummond, are another proof of the same very natural circumstance. Drummond's name has suffered from his injudicious record of the visit which Ben Jonson paid him in 1618: but his sonnets, which take a very high place indeed in the long catalogue of such poems, are a much more enduring claim to celebrity than his notes of Jonson's table-talk. In addition to his regular sonnets, he wrote *canzoni* and madrigals, those customary appendages to the sonnet-cycle; nor must we forget his unique contribution to prose literature, a meditation on death called *A Cypress Grove* (1623), which has hardly attracted the notice it deserves. Although Drummond had lived much in France, and must certainly have been acquainted with French and Italian sonnet work, his own originality saves him from slavish imitation. The same may be said of a third sonnet writer, ROBERT KER, EARL OF ANCRUM (1578–1654). The work of SIR ALEXANDER SCOTT (1525?–1584?), "the Scottish Anacreon," consisting of love-songs, satires, and madrigals, belongs to a much earlier period.

The allegorical poem, of which Sir David Lyndsay had been almost the last representative, found another echo in Scotland as late as 1597, when ALEXANDER MONTGOMERIE (1556?–1610?) published *The Cherry and the Slae*. This work long continued to be popular, and its metre was adopted by Burns. If we add to these names SIR RICHARD MAITLAND, LORD LETHINGTON (1496–1586), the collector of the ancient poems which bear his name; ALEXANDER HUME (1560?–1609), whose *Hymns and Sacred Songs* appeared in 1599; and, last but not least, KING JAMES VI (1566–1625), our own James I, who, to add to his varied stock of acquirements, and to parallel his own poetical achievements with his ancestors', produced, in 1584, a volume of verse, entitled *Essayes of a Prentice in the Divine Art of Poesie, with the Rewlis and Cautelis to be pursued and avoided*—these will complete the tale of Scottish poetry in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

CHAPTER V.

ENGLISH PROSE IN THE REIGNS OF ELIZABETH AND JAMES I—A.D. 1558–1625.

§ 1. Philosophical importance of the era. § 2. Elizabethan chroniclers: STOW, HOLINSHED, and SPEED. § 3. SIR WALTER RALEGH. § 4. Collections of voyages and travels: HAKLUYT, PURCHAS, DAVIS. § 5. Anglican theology: HOOKER'S *Ecclesiastical Polity*. § 6. Life of FRANCIS BACON. § 7. Bacon's place in philosophy: the scholastic system. § 8. History of previous attempts to throw off the yoke of the scholastic philosophy. § 9. Bacon's *Instauratio Magna*. § 10. First and Second Books: *De Augmentis Scientiarum* and the *Novum Organum*; the Inductive Method. § 11. Third Book: *Sylva Sylvarum*; and sketch of remaining books. § 12. Bacon's services to science. § 13. His *Essays* and other English writings. § 14. BURTON'S *Anatomy of Melancholy*. § 15. LORD HERBERT OF CHERBURY; THOMAS HOBBES: the *Leviathan*.

Practical character of the Elizabethan era.

§ 1. THE principal object of the present chapter is to trace the nature and the results of that immense revolution in philosophy brought about by the immortal writings of Bacon. It will, however, be unavoidable, in accordance with the chronological order generally adopted in this work, to sketch the character of other authors, of great though inferior importance, who flourished about this time. Of the general intellectual character of the age of Elizabeth something already has been said: it may be observed that much of the peculiarly practical character which distinguishes the political and philosophical literature of the time is to be traced to the general laicising of the higher functions of the public service, and is one of the most notable results of the English Reformation. The clergy had no longer the monopoly of that learning and those acquirements which, during the Middle Ages, had secured them the monopoly of power: while the vigorous personal character of the great Queen combined with her jealousy of dictation to surround her throne with ministers chosen, for the most part, from among the middle classes of her people. To men like these she accorded unshaken confidence, while she never allowed them to obtain any of that undue influence which was exerted upon her feminine weaknesses by unworthy favourites like Leicester and Essex. Such men as Burghley, Walsingham, and Sir Thomas Smith belong to a peculiar type and class of statesmen; and their administration, although less brilliant and dramatic than many other

historical administrations, was, for wisdom and patriotism, without a parallel.

§ 2. In the humble, but useful, department of the historical chronicle, a few words must be said of the labours of JOHN STOW (1525?–1605) and RAPHAEL HOLINSHED (d. 1580?). Stow, a London citizen of very slight literary pretensions but extraordinary industry, devoted the whole of his long life to the task of collecting materials for his chronicles, the most important of which was his *Survey of London* (1598), a work still of the highest value to the antiquary. His earlier works were the *Summary of English Chronicles*, first published in 1565, and the *Annals* of 1592, originally published as *The Chronicles of England* (1580). He also edited Chaucer (1561), and, under the patronage of Archbishop Parker, was the first editor of Matthew of Westminster (1567), Matthew Paris (1571), and Thomas Walsingham (1574). Holinshed's chronicle (1578) took the form of a general history of England. It was from Holinshed that Shakespeare drew the materials for many of his half-legendary, half-historical, pieces—such as *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, and the like; and it is curious to observe the way in which the genius of the poet animates and transfigures the flat and prosaic language of the old chronicler, whose very words he often quotes textually. Striking examples of this will be found in *Henry V* and *Henry VI.* To the names of Stow and Holinshed should be added that of JOHN SPEED (1552?–1629), who, in 1611, published a *History of Great Britain* from the earliest times down to the reign of James I. This work formed a sequel to *The Theatre of Great Britain*, which Speed had published earlier in the same year.

The Chroniclers.

§ 3. The most extraordinary and meteoric personage in the literary history of this time is SIR WALTER RALEGH, the brilliancy of whose courtly and military career can be equalled only by the wonderful variety of his talents and accomplishments, and by the tragic heroism of his death. Early in life, he attracted the favour of Elizabeth by an act of romantic gallantry which has furnished the theme of a famous anecdote; and, both by his military exploits and by his graceful flattery, he long kept possession of her capricious favour. He highly distinguished himself in the Irish wars, during which he visited Spenser at Kilcolman; and, on his return, he brought the author of *The Faëry Queen* back to England with him. As a navigator and adventurer his distinction was no less; he was engaged in the colonisation of Virginia and the conquest of Guiana, and is said to have been the first to introduce the use of the potato and tobacco into England. On the accession of James I he seems to have been involved, on the very slightest grounds, in an accusation of high treason connected with the alleged plot to place the unfortunate Arabella Stewart on the throne, and, being sentenced to death, was confined for over twelve years in the Tower. Proposing a

SIR WALTER RALEGH (1552?–1618).

new expedition to South America, he was allowed to undertake it; but, when it had proved unsuccessful, the vacillating James I, in order to gratify the hatred of Ralegh's constant enemies, the Spaniards, and especially of the ambassador Gondomar, allowed him to be executed under the old sentence (1618). During his twelve years of imprisonment Ralegh devoted himself to literary and scientific occupations, and, with the aid of many learned friends, of whom Jonson was one, produced his *History of the World* (1614). The variety of style in this work may prove that the finer passages are due to his helpers: but it seems unfair without proof to rob Ralegh of the credit of a very singular masterpiece of English prose. The history comes down only to the Second Macedonian War. "There is little," says Hallam, "now obsolete in the words of Ralegh, nor, to any great degree, in his turn of phrase; the periods, where pains have been taken with them, show that artificial structure which we find in Sidney and Hooker: he is less pedantic than most of his contemporaries, seldom low, never affected."

The "History of the World."

§ 4. The immense outburst of intellectual activity which renders the middle of the sixteenth century so memorable an epoch in the history of philosophy, was not without a parallel in the rapid extension of geographical knowledge. England, which gave birth to Bacon, the successful conqueror of new worlds of philosophical speculation, was foremost among the countries whose bold navigators explored unknown regions of the globe. Innumerable expeditions, sometimes fitted out by the State, but far more generally undertaken by private speculation, exhibited incredible skill, bravery, and perseverance in opening out new passages for commerce, and, in particular, in the endeavour to solve the great commercial and geographical problem of finding a north-west passage to the Eastern hemisphere. The commercial rivalry between England and Spain, and, subsequently, between England and Holland, brought into existence an illustrious band of navigators, whose exploits, partaking of the double character both of privateering and of trade, laid the foundation of that naval skill which made England the mistress of the seas. Drake, Frobisher, Davis, Ralegh, were the worthy ancestors of Cook, Franklin, and Nelson. The recital of their dangers and discoveries was frequently recorded, simply and picturesquely, by these hardy navigators; and the same age that laid the foundation of our naval greatness produced also a branch of our literature which is neither the least valuable nor the least characteristic—the narration of maritime discovery. RICHARD HAKLUYT (1552?–1616) and SAMUEL PURCHAS (1575?–1626) were indefatigable chroniclers and compilers, who left to posterity large collections of invaluable materials concerning the naval adventure of those times; while the navigator, SIR JOHN DAVIS (d. 1605), wrote from personal

Travellers' Tales.

Collections of voyages, etc.

experience as the explorer of the Northern Ocean, and the discoverer of a strait whose name is still a monument to his glory. The style of all these narratives is simple, grave, and unadorned; the narrative, in itself so full of intense dramatic excitement, has the charm of a brave old seaman's description of the toils and dangers he has passed; and the tremendous perils so simply encountered with means so insignificant are painted with an artless mixture of professional *sang-froid* and childlike trust in Providence. The occasional acts of cruelty and oppression, which are mainly to be attributed to a somewhat incipient stage of civilisation, are more than redeemed by the indomitable courage and invincible perseverance of these illustrious navigators.

§ 5. In the theological differences which sprang out of the demand for Church reform at the end of the fifteenth century, and culminated in the great separation of the sixteenth, the Anglican divines took a central position, equidistant from the unquestioning devotion to authority advocated by the Roman communion and from the extreme importance attached to private judgment by the definitely Protestant theologians. This position had a very important influence upon the Church of Elizabethan England: it defined its situation as a compromise between two opposite extremes. The politic and independent attitude of the English Church at this dangerous crisis secured it something of its solidity and influence. Naturally, the growth of a national spirit in religious matters, to say nothing of the persecuting zeal of Henry VIII, exposed the Church of England to the violent hostility of the central power whose authority it had rejected; and Henry's rackings and burnings were avenged in the reign of Mary. But no sooner was the Church recognised as the guardian of the State's religion, than it was exposed to attacks from the very opposite point of the theological compass, and, later on, succumbed for a time to the determined enmity of a religious school with whose doctrines it had very little in common. Elizabeth, indeed, continued her father's political warfare with Rome; but the real religious opposition came from the gradually increasing hostility of Puritanism, which, during her reign, insensibly acquired more and more power. The University of Cambridge, for instance, was at this time overwhelmed by a wave of Puritan doctrine, which, combined with the Platonic philosophy, was the guiding influence of a great poet like Spenser, and showed its abiding result in Sir Walter Mildmay's foundation of Emmanuel College. The great champion of Anglicanism against the encroachments of the Genevan school of theology was RICHARD HOOKER, born at Heavitree, a suburb of Exeter. His parents were poor, but he gained a clerkship at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in 1567, and subsequently became a scholar, fellow, and lecturer. However, about 1581 he married, and was obliged to vacate his fellowship for the country living of Drayton-

Position of the Church of England.

RICHARD HOOKER (1554?–1600). *Life.*

Beauchamp in Buckinghamshire. His eloquence and vast learning were not forgotten, and from 1585 to 1591 he was Master of the Temple. His colleague at the Temple Church, one Walter Travers, was unfortunately an attached adherent of the Calvinistic doctrines of Church government; and Hooker's mildness and modesty, which rendered controversy and disputation insupportable to him, urged him to implore his Ordinary to remove him from his post. For the last nine years of his life, from 1591 to 1600, he lived quietly in a country parsonage, first at Boscombe in Wiltshire, and then at Bishopsbourne, a few miles south of Canterbury. It was here, for the most part, that he executed the great work which has placed him among the most eminent of the Anglican divines, and among the best prose writers of his age. The title of this work is *A Treatise on the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, and its object is to investigate and define the fundamental principles upon which is founded the right of the Church to the obedience of its members, and the duty of the members to pay obedience to the Church. It appeared in three parts: the first four books in 1594, the fifth in 1597, the last three long after his death. Although its principal object is to establish the relative rights and duties of the Anglican Church in particular, and to defend its organisation against Roman attacks on the one hand and Calvinistic error on the other, Hooker has dug deep into the eternal granite on which are founded all law, all obedience, and all right, political as well as religious. The *Ecclesiastical Polity* is a monument of close and cogent logic, supported by immense and varied erudition, and is written in a style so free from vulgar pedantry, so clear, vigorous, and unaffected save by occasional Latinisms, as to form a remarkable contrast with most of the contemporary works of theology, so overloaded with quotation and deformed by conceits and the vice of antithesis. It is the first great monument of English prose after the Reformation, the earliest masterpiece of a new art. It is to be regretted that this magnificent work was never finished by the author, or, at least, if finished, has descended to us in a somewhat mutilated form; for the Sixth Book, although in all probability Hooker's, is supposed to be a fragment taken by an injudicious editor from the materials of an entirely different work.

The "Ecclesiastical Polity."

§ 6. The political life of FRANCIS BACON forms a contrast so striking to his purely intellectual or philosophical career, that it would be difficult to find, in the records of historical biography, two things so diametrically opposed. He was the son of Elizabeth's favourite and trusted minister, the Lord Keeper, Sir Nicholas Bacon. Sir Nicholas was a fair specimen of that peculiar class of able statesmen with whom the great Queen surrounded her administration, a type which, as already has been said, is found in persons like Burghley, Walsingham, Ellesmere, and Smith—

FRANCIS BACON (1561–1626). *Life.*

men of great practical knowledge of the world, of powerful, if not, perhaps, inventive faculties, and possessing a prudence and moderation in their religious opinions which was of much importance in the agitated condition of affairs consequent upon the Reformation. Francis Bacon was a nephew of Burghley, for his mother, Anne Cooke, was a younger sister of Burghley's wife. The boy, from his earliest childhood, gave earnest of those powers of intellect and that readiness of mind which afterwards distinguished him among men. He went to Trinity College, Cambridge, at an age which even at that time was very early. But, even as a boy, he is said to have shown plain indications of that enquiring spirit which attracted him to the investigation of natural laws, and a gravity and presence of mind which drew the attention of the Queen; and it is reported that, while studying at Cambridge, he was struck with the defects of the philosophical methods founded upon the scholastic or Aristotelian system which was then universally adopted in scientific investigation. Then, perhaps, first dawned upon his mind the dim outline of that great reformation in philosophy which he was afterwards destined to bring about. His father, in 1576, sent him with Sir Amias Paulet's embassy to France; and a residence of about four years in France, Germany, and Italy, not only gave him the opportunity of examining the state and inclinations of the principal European Courts and acquiring a remarkable stock of political knowledge, but rendered him the still more valuable service of enlarging his knowledge of mankind and giving him an acquaintance with the state of philosophy and letters. He was recalled from abroad by his father's death in 1579, and found himself under the necessity of entering upon some active career. He appears to have felt that the natural bent of his genius inclined to the study of science; and he begged his kinsman and natural protector, Burghley, to obtain for him the means of pursuing his desire. The Treasurer, however, was jealous of his nephew's extraordinary abilities, and feared that they might eclipse or interfere with those of his son Robert, who was just then entering upon his long and brilliant career. He therefore treated his nephew with harshness and indifference, and insisted upon his embracing the profession of the law. Francis studied at Gray's Inn, of which he was already a member; and that wonderful aptitude, which found no labour too arduous and no subtlety too refined, very soon made him the most distinguished advocate of his day, and a popular teacher of legal science. The jealousy of his kinsmen, the Cecils, both father and son, appears to have veiled itself, in some degree, perhaps, unconsciously, under the pretext that Bacon was a flighty and bookish young man, too fond of projects and theories to be likely to become a useful servant of the State. But the countenance which was refused to Bacon

Bacon at Cambridge.

His travels.

Enters the law.

by his uncle and cousin, he obtained from the generous and enthusiastic friendship of Essex, who used all his influence to obtain for his friend the post of Attorney General, and, failing in this attempt, consoled him for the disappointment by the gift of a considerable estate. During this period of his life Bacon continued to rise rapidly, both in professional reputation as a lawyer, and in fame for his eloquence and philosophy. He sat in the House of Commons from 1584 onwards, and gave evidence, not only of his unequalled powers as a speaker, but also of that cowardly and interested subservience to the Court which was the great blot upon his glory and the cause of his ultimate disgrace. There is nothing in history more melancholy than to trace the way in which this man of sublime intellect truckled to every favourite with power to help or to hurt, and betrayed in succession all those to whom self-interest had attached him for the moment. After submitting, with a subserviency unworthy of a man of the least spirit, to the haughty reproaches of the Cecils, he abandoned their faction for that of Essex, whom he flattered and betrayed. When the unhappy Earl, after his frantic conspiracy and revolt, was tried for high treason, Bacon, although he felt for his benefactor as warm an attachment as was compatible with a mean and servile nature, not only abandoned him, but volunteered with malignant eagerness in the foremost ranks of his enemies, and employed all his immense powers as an advocate and pamphleteer to precipitate his ruin and blacken his memory. Bacon, it is only fair to say, was not a malignant man: he was a needy, flexible, and unscrupulous courtier; and showed, in his after-career, the same ignoble readiness to betray the duties of the judge which he now showed in forgetting his obligations as a friend.

Bacon naturally a time-server.

Bacon thus gradually and steadily rose in the service of the State; and, at the accession of James I, like so many people who had been neglected under the Cecil *régime*, he was taken into favour. He was knighted at the coronation, and, following his habitual methods, attached himself to James' favourites—first to the ignoble Carr, and afterwards to the haughty Buckingham. In 1606 he married Alice Barnham, the daughter of a London alderman, and, with her, a considerable fortune. He sat in more than one Parliament, and was successively made Solicitor General and Attorney General. In 1617 he became Lord Keeper, and in 1618, Lord High Chancellor of England and Baron Verulam, to which title was added, three years afterwards, the higher style of Viscount St. Albans. Although the whole of his public career was stained with acts of the basest servility and corruption, it is not uninstructive to mention that Bacon was one of the last ministers of the law in England, if not the very last, to employ and to defend the application of torture in judicial procedure. He occupied

Bacon's prosperity under James I.

the highest office of justice for four years, and, in the discharge of his great functions, displayed all the wisdom and eloquence which characterised his mind, and all the servility and meanness which disgraced his conduct. There are, of course, two sides to the case, and many of the charges brought against him have been proved to be unfounded by his various biographers. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that Bacon was a political disciple, like so many statesmen of his age, of Machiavelli, and read the ingenious conclusions of the Italian philosopher as susceptible of application to all departments of public affairs. And so, on the assembling of Parliament in 1621, the House of Commons, filled with a just indignation against the insupportable abuses, corruptions, and monopolies countenanced by the Government, ordered a deliberate investigation into various acts of bribery of which the Chancellor was accused. The King and his favourite, although ready to do all in their power to screen a criminal who had always been their devoted servant, were not bold enough to face the indignation of the whole country, and allowed the investigation to proceed. It was carried on before the House of Lords, and its result was his conviction of many acts of gross corruption as a judge. Bacon himself, whether altogether guilty or not, was at all events conscience-stricken enough to confess his own guilt; and, in language which under other circumstances would have been profoundly pathetic, threw himself upon the indulgence of his judges. His sentence, although it could not be otherwise than severe, was evidently just: he was condemned to be deprived of his place as Chancellor, to pay a fine of £40,000, to be imprisoned in the Tower during the King's pleasure, to be ever after incapable of holding any office of State, and to be incapacitated from sitting in Parliament and from coming within twelve miles of the Court. In imposing so severe a punishment, Bacon's judges, it must be remembered, well knew that much of it must be mitigated or altogether remitted; and the result showed the justice of their anticipations. The culprit was almost immediately released from confinement; the fine, which, by the way, did not amount to half the gains he was supposed to have made by corrupt practices, was not only remitted by royal favour, but, by the manner of its remission, was converted into a sort of protection of the fallen Chancellor against the claims of his importunate creditors; and he was speedily restored to the privilege of presenting himself at Court. There can be no doubt that James and Buckingham had felt the greatest reluctance in abandoning Bacon to the indignation of Parliament, and that they only did so in the conviction that any attempt to save their servant must not only have been inevitably unsuccessful, but must have involved the Government itself in odium, without in the least alleviating the lot of the guilty Chancellor.

His perversion of justice.

Bacon's impeachment.

His closing years and death.

The life of the fallen minister was prolonged for five years after his severe but merited disgrace; and these years were passed in intriguing, flattering, and imploring pecuniary relief in his distresses. During his whole life he had lived splendidly and extravagantly. His taste for magnificence in houses, gardens, and trains of domestics, had been such as may generally be found in men of lively imagination; and it was to escape from the perpetual embarrassments which are the natural consequences of such tastes that he, in all probability, resorted to means involving that gradual deadening of the moral sense, and that blunting of the sense of honour and self-respect which was the origin of his crimes. Bacon's death took place, after a few days' illness, on the 9th of April, 1626, and was caused by a cold and fever caught in travelling near London. The real origin of this was his delight in scientific experiments, and his notion of preserving meat by freezing. He got out of his carriage, bought a fowl, and filled the inside of the bird with snow, which was then lying thick upon the ground. In doing this he caught a chill, which was aggravated by his being put into a damp bed in Lord Arundel's house at Highgate. He was buried, by his own desire, next to his mother, in St. Michael's Church, St. Albans. The magnificent seat of Gorhambury, which he had constructed for himself, was in St. Michael's parish, near the site of the Roman city of Verulamium, which gave him his second title. He had no children, and left his affairs involved in debt and confusion.

Medieval philosophy.

§ 7. In order to appreciate the services rendered by Bacon to the cause of truth and knowledge, which have placed his name foremost among the benefactors of humanity, two precautions are indispensable. First, we must form a distinct idea of the nature of those philosophical methods which his system of investigation supplanted in physical research; and, secondly, we must dismiss from our minds the common and very erroneous idea that Bacon was an inventor or discoverer in any specific branch of knowledge. His mission was not to teach mankind a philosophy, but to teach men how to philosophise. To imagine otherwise would be a vulgar error like that of the clown who imagined that Newton was the discoverer of gravitation. The task which Bacon proposed to himself was loftier and more useful than that of the mere inventor in any branch of science; and the excellence of his method can nowhere be more clearly seen than in those instances in which he himself has applied it to facts in his own day imperfectly known or erroneously explained. The most brilliant name among the ancient philosophers is incontestably that of Aristotle. His immense acquirements, extending to almost every branch of physical, political, intellectual, and moral research, and the powers of a mind unrivalled at once for breadth of view and subtlety of

ARISTOTLE.

discrimination, have justly secured him the highest place among the greatest intellects of the earth. In the fullest sense, he was, as Dante called him, "il maestro di color che sanno"—the master of those who know. But the instrumental or mechanical part of his system, the mode by which he taught his followers that they could arrive at true deductions in scientific investigation, was, in inferior hands, singularly susceptible of abuse. His careful examination of nature, his wise and cautious prudence in the application of general formulas of reasoning to particular phenomena, were very soon neglected by his disciples. They found themselves in possession of a mode of research which seemed to promise an infallible correctness in the results obtained, and, by their very admiration of their master's genius, were led to leave out of sight his prudent reserve in the employment of his method. The synthetic mode of reasoning flatters the pride of human intellect, because those who use it are tempted, in discovering truths, to believe that the discovery is due to their unassisted powers; and the important part played by those powers in the investigation renders the method peculiarly obnoxious to that kind of corruption which arises from over-subtlety and the vain employment of words. Nor must we leave out of account the deteriorating influence of the various nations and epochs through which the ancient deductive philosophy had been handed down from the time of Aristotle himself till the days of Bacon. The misapplication of it had by that time become so apparent that a great reform was inevitable. The acute, disputatious spirit of the Greek character had from the first provoked a tendency towards vain word-catching which was further accentuated in the schools of the Lower Empire. The Orientals received from these schools a philosophical system which was already a sad corruption of Aristotle; and the mystical and over-subtle genius of the Jewish and Arabian speculators added new elements of decay. It was in this state that the doctrines of Aristotle were received among the Christian philosophers of the Middle Ages. In their hands the methods of the Greek philosopher were not likely to be employed largely for promoting the knowledge of physical nature. Their first concern in adopting the Aristotelian philosophy was to bring it into harmony with the dogmas of the Faith, and they studied it mainly with a view to the service which it could render in the exposition and defence of theological doctrines. Thus the great text-book of medieval theology, the *Summa Theologiæ* of St. Thomas Aquinas, was a studied application of the theories of Aristotle to Catholic dogma. This alliance of theology with physical science did not tend to promote scientific enquiry. The theologian had no interest in pursuing science for its own sake. It is true that some remarkable medieval scholars, like Roger Bacon, did so; but to the greater number of students theological dilemmas and the allied problems of metaphysics

Aristotelian philosophy in the Middle Ages.

were the subjects of chief importance, and to these, accordingly, their attention was wholly turned.

Aim of Bacon's philosophy.

But, apart from theological interests and influence, the aim of philosophy before Bacon's time had been different from that which he assigned to it. The ultimate aim of philosophical speculation had been to discover Truth in its more abstract form, to exercise, purify, and educate the human faculties, and to carry the mind higher in the direction of the Supreme Good and Supreme Beauty; and the investigation of Nature was merely a means to this end. Practical utility—the increase of the comforts of life—was regarded as a result which might be achieved in this process of raising the mind to a certain ideal height of wisdom, but it was of secondary importance to the true philosopher. Now the aim proposed by the philosophy of Bacon was wholly different; and, as a consequence, the methods by which philosophy was to be studied were different also. Bacon conceived that all the powers of human reason and all the energies of invention and research should be concentrated upon promoting the comfort of human life, diminishing the suffering and increasing the enjoyment of our imperfect existence here below, and extending the empire of man over the realms of nature. This is an aim less ambitious than that ideal Virtue and Wisdom which were the aspiration of the older philosophy, but it has the advantage of being more easily attained. The experience of twenty centuries had proved that it was not to be reached on the lines followed by the older systems; the subtle investigations and prolonged controversies of the most acute and powerful intellects, during so many generations, had left these questions of practical and material well-being pretty much as they found them at first. This was no doubt a serious shortcoming in the speculations of the older philosophy; and even the most ardent metaphysician will admit that the time was come for devoting greater attention to questions bearing upon the material welfare of humanity, and to the development of the utilitarian side of human knowledge.

The Renaissance and the scholastic philosophy.

§ 8. As has been said, attempts had been made before Bacon's time to attract speculation into this practical direction. But the union of philosophy with medieval theology was too strong for these Reformers, and they frequently incurred unpopularity and suspicion by their efforts to interfere with the prevalent fashions in philosophy. The growth and expansion of the Renaissance movement, however, rendered attempts of this kind more and more feasible. In its early stages, the chief activity of the movement had been devoted to the revival of works of classical literature and to the pursuit of ideals in style. But it was inevitable that the results of such study should in time foster an independent investigation of the remains of ancient philosophy, and encourage a school of secular scholars who would carry on their

investigations outside the schools of theology. This inevitable tendency of things was hastened and developed by the revolt against ecclesiastical authority which is known as the Reformation. In throwing off obedience to the centralised power of Rome, the Reformers were eager to repudiate many of the institutions which had been identified with the Papal supremacy. The old relations of theology and philosophy, although recognised for a time by the earlier Reformers, whose theological and conservative instincts were especially strong, could not long exist in the atmosphere of independent and uncontrolled speculation which the new movement created. The revival of the idealistic philosophy of Plato had an almost incalculable influence upon the Reformation, and its opposition to the materialistic tendencies of Aristotelianism led to that quagmire of abstractions and unrealities in which so many of the continental Reformers lost themselves. Obviously, philosophy, undergoing so radical a change, could hardly fail in time to assert its entire independence of theology, and to claim the right of carrying on its enquiries on its own lines, without regard for, or deference to, the teaching of dogmatic religion. This was what actually occurred; and it is to England that we are to look for the first distinct manifestation of this independent attitude on the part of philosophy. England, in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I, was precisely the country in which such a revolution was possible. Religion was become entangled with practical politics: the theologians were controversialists who had little time for abstract speculation; and a particular combination of circumstances and qualities combined to make Francis Bacon, and him alone, the apostle of the new philosophy.

The "Instauratio Magna."

§ 9. The great object, we have said, which Bacon proposed to himself in proclaiming the advantages of the Inductive Method, was the improvement of the condition of mankind. From an early age he had been struck with the defects and the stationary and unproductive character of the Deductive Method; and during the whole of his brilliant, agitated, and too often ignominious career, he had constantly and patiently laboured, adding stone after stone to that splendid edifice which will enshrine his name long after his crimes, his weaknesses, his ambition and servility, have been forgotten. His philosophical system is contained in the great work, or, rather, series of works, to which he intended to give the general title of *Instauratio Magna*, or the Great Institution of True Philosophy. The whole of this neither was nor could have been executed by him; for every new addition to the stock of human knowledge would, as he saw, modify the conclusions of his philosophical method, although it would only confirm its soundness. The *Instauratio* was to consist of six separate parts or books, of which the following is a short synoptical arrangement:—

Synopsis of the work.

i. *Partitiones Scientiarum* : a summary or classification of all knowledge, with indications of those branches which have been more or less imperfectly treated.

ii. *Novum Organum* : the New Instrument, an exposition of the methods to be adopted in the investigation of truth, with indications of the principal sources of human error, and the remedies against that error in future.

iii. *Phænomena Universi*, sive, Historia Naturalis et Experimentalis ad condendam Philosophiam : a complete body of well-observed facts and experiments in all branches of human knowledge, to furnish the raw material upon which the New Method was to be applied, in order to obtain results of truth.

iv. *Scala Intellectus*, sive, Filum Labyrinthi : rules for the gradual ascent of the mind from particular instances or phenomena, to principles continually more and more abstract ; and warnings against the danger of proceeding otherwise than gradually and cautiously.

v. *Prodromi*, sive, Anticipationes Philosophiæ Secundæ : anticipations or forestallings of the New Philosophy, *i.e.* such truths as could be established, so to speak, provisionally, so as to be afterwards tested by the application of the New Method.

vi. *Philosophia Secunda*, sive, Scientia activa : the result of the just, careful, and complete application of the methods previously laid down to the vast body of facts to be accumulated and observed in accordance with the rules and precautions contained in the second and fourth parts.

Its logical sequence.

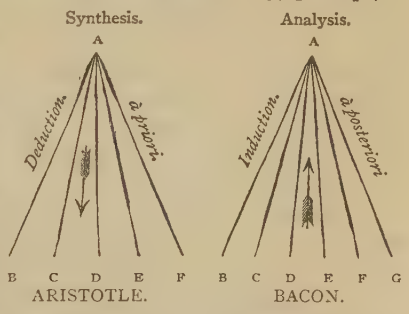
Let us compare the position of Bacon, with respect to science in general, with that of an architect invited to undertake the reconstruction of a palace, ancient and splendid, but, in consequence of the lapse of time and changes in mode of living, found to be ruinous and uninhabitable. Under these circumstances an enlightened artist would make it his first care to draw an exact plan of the building in its present state, so as to form a clear notion of its extent, defects, and conveniences as it stands : and not till then would he proceed to demolish the existing structure. He would next prepare such instruments, tools, and mechanical aids as would be likely to render his work of construction more rapid, certain, and economical. Thirdly, he would accumulate the necessary materials. Fourthly, he would provide the ladders. Lastly, he would begin to build; but, should the edifice be so vast that no human life would be long enough to terminate it, he would construct so much of it as would suffice to give his successors an idea of the general plan, style, and disposition of the parts, and leave it to be completed by future generations. It will easily be seen how accurately the mode of proceeding in Bacon's

great work corresponds with common-sense and with the method followed by our imaginary architect. Bacon is the builder; the great temple of knowledge is the edifice, which the labours of our race have finished according to his plan.

§ 10. Let us now see what portion of this project Bacon was able to execute. The first part, consisting of a general view of the state of science in his time, with an explanation of the causes of its sterility and unprogressiveness, was published in 1605, and took the form of an English treatise, bearing the title of *The Proficience and Advancement of Learning*: this was afterwards much altered and extended, and was republished in Latin under the title *De Augmentis Scientiarum* (1623). The *Novum Organum*, the most important portion of Bacon's work, is that in which the necessity and the principles of the Inductive Method are laid down and demonstrated. It is, in short, the compendium of the Baconian logic. It was published, in Latin, in 1620. The fundamental difference between the method recommended by Bacon and that which had been so long adopted by philosophers, may, perhaps, be rendered clear by a comparison of the accompanying little diagrams.

Beginnings of the "Instauratio."

The Inductive Method.



In the first of these the point A may be supposed to represent some general principle upon which depend any number of detached facts or phenomena B, C, D, E, and F. Now let it be supposed that we are seeking for the explanation of one or all of these phenomena; or, in other words, are desirous of discovering the law upon which they depend. It is obvious that we may proceed as the arithmetician proceeds in the solution of a problem involving the search after an unknown quantity or number—that is, we may *suppose* the law of nature to be so and so, and, by applying this law to one or all of the phenomena within our observation, see if it corresponds with them or not. If it does, we conclude, so far as our examination has extended, that we have hit upon the true result of which we are in search: if not, we must repeat the process, as the arithmetician would do in a like case, until we obtain an answer corresponding with all the conditions of the problem: and it is evident that, the greater the number of separate facts to which we successfully apply our theoretical explanation, the greater will be the probability of our having hit upon the true

one. Now this application of a pre-established theory to particular facts or phenomena is precisely the signification of the word *synthesis*. It is obvious that the march of the mind in this mode of investigation is from the general to the particular —that is, in the direction of the arrow, or downwards—whence this mode of investigation is styled *deduction*, or a descent from the general law to the individual example. Similarly, the Aristotelian method has received the designation *à priori*, because in it the establishment, or, at all events, the provisional employment of a theory, is prior to its application in practice, just as in measuring an unknown space we previously establish a rule, as of a foot, yard, etc., which we afterwards apply to the space to be so determined. In the second diagram all the elements are the same as in the previous one, with the exception that here the process follows a precisely opposite direction—that is, from a careful comparison of the different facts the mind gradually travels upward, with slow and cautious advances, from bare phenomena to more general considerations, till it reaches some point in which all the phenomena agree ; and this point is the law of nature or general principle of which we were in search. As synthesis signifies composition, so *analysis* signifies resolution : and it is by a continual and cautious process of resolution that the mind ascends in the direction marked by the arrow—from the particular to the general. This ascending process is chiefly indicated by the term *induction*, which signifies an ascent from particular instances to the general law ; and the term *à posteriori* denotes that the theory, being evolved from the examination of the individual facts, is necessarily posterior or subsequent to the examination of those facts.

All human inventions have their good and their bad sides, their advantages and defects : and it is only by a comparison between the relative advantages and defects that we can establish the superiority of one system or mode of action over another. On contemplating the two methods, of which the above is a very rough and popular explanation, it will be obvious at once that the deductive mode enables us, *when we have hit upon the right theory*, to arrive at absolute or almost mathematical truth ; while analysis, being dependent for its accuracy upon the number of phenomena which furnish the material for our induction, can never arrive at absolute certainty, inasmuch as it is impossible to examine all the phenomena of a single class, and as, while any phenomena remain unexamined, we never can be certain that the discovery of some new fact will not completely overset our conclusions. The utmost, therefore, that we can arrive at by this route is a very high degree of probability—a degree which will be higher in proportion as it is founded upon a greater number of instances and attained by a more careful process of sifting. But the human mind is by nature practically incapable of distinguishing between a very high probability and an absolute

The à posteriori *versus the* à priori *reasoning.*

certainty: at least, the first is able to produce upon the reason the same amount of conviction as an absolute certainty—and an amount, perhaps, even greater. If we consider, therefore, the enormous number of chances against the likelihood that any given *à priori* deduction is the right one—for, as in an arithmetical problem, there can be only one correct solution, while the number of possible incorrect solutions is infinite—and if we observe that, until all the possible phenomena have been submitted to the synthetic test we never can be sure that we have the right theory, we shall easily agree that the possible certainty of a theory is dearly bought when compared with the far greater safety of the analytical mode of reasoning, which, keeping fast hold of nature at each step of its progress, has the possibility, nay, even the certainty, of correcting its errors as they may arise.

The most important portion of the whole *Instauratio* is the *Novum Organum*, in which Bacon lays down the rules for the employment of the Inductive Method in investigating truth, and points out the origin and remedies of the errors that most commonly oppose us in our search. *The "Novum Organum."*

The earlier philosophers, and particularly Aristotle, assigning a great and almost unlimited efficacy in this research to the intellectual faculties alone, contented themselves with perfecting those logical formulas, and, chief among them, the syllogism, by whose aid, as by the operation of some infallible instrument, they conceived that the result would surely be attained; and gave rules for the employment of their syllogism, pointing out the means of detecting and guarding against fallacies or irregularities in the expression of their reasoning. Bacon went far deeper than this, and showed that the most dangerous and universal sources of human error have their origin, not in the illegitimate employment of terms, but in the weaknesses, prejudices, and passions of mankind, exhibited either in the race or in the individual. He classifies these sources of error, which, in his vivid picturesque language, he calls *Idols*, or false appearances, in four categories; the idols of the Tribe, of the Den, of the Market-place, and of the Theatre. Under the first head he warns us against those errors and prejudices that are common to the whole race, the tribe to which we all belong; the idols of the Den are those which arise from the particular circumstances of the individual, as his country, his age, his religion, or his personal character; the errors of the Market-place are the result of the universal habit of using terms the meaning of which we have either not distinctly agreed on, or do not clearly understand. Such terms are used in the interchange of thought as money is passed from hand to hand in the market; and we accept and transfer to others coins whose real value we have not taken the trouble to test. The idols of the Theatre are the errors arising from false systems of philosophy, which dress up *The sources of error, or "Idols."*

conceptions in unreal disguises, like comedians upon the stage. We may compare the precautions of the older logic to the methods of a physician who, directing his efforts to the external symptoms of a disorder, should think his duty performed when he had purified the skin, although at the probable cost of driving in the disease and rendering it twice as dangerous. Bacon, like a more enlightened doctor, sought out the deep-seated constitutional source of the malady; and it was to this that he addressed his treatment, certain that when the internal cause was removed the symptoms would vanish of themselves.

Later portions of the "Instauratio."

§ 11. Of the Third Book, Bacon has given only a specimen, intended to show the method which should be adopted in collecting and classifying facts and experiments; for in a careful examination of facts and experiments consists the whole essence of his induction, and in it are concealed the future destinies of human knowledge and power. This portion of the work contains a Latin history of the Winds (1622), of Life and Death (1623), and a collection of experiments in Physics, or, as he calls it, Natural History, written in English. This portion of the work alone is sufficient to show how slight are Bacon's claims or pretensions to the character of a discoverer in natural science, and how completely he was under the influence of the errors of his day; but, at the same time, it proves the innate merit of his method, and the power of that mind which could legislate for the whole realm of knowledge and for sciences yet unborn. To the English fragment he gives the title of *Sylva Sylvarum*, *i.e.* a collection of materials. This was published posthumously in 1627.

The Fourth Book, *Scala Intellectus*, of which Bacon left but a brief abstract, was intended to show the gradual march which ought to be followed by induction, in ascending from the fact perceptible to the senses to principles which are to become more and more general as we advance; and the author's object was to warn against the danger of leaping abruptly over the intermediate steps of the investigation. Of the Fifth Book, he wrote only a preface, and the Sixth was never begun.

Bacon and science.

§ 12. The best proof of the soundness and fertility of Bacon's methods is simple and practical. We have only to compare the progress of humanity in all the useful arts during the two centuries and a half since induction has been generally employed in all branches of science, with the progress made during the twenty centuries that elapsed between Aristotle and Bacon. It is no exaggeration to say that in the shorter interval that progress has been ten times greater than in the longer. That this progress is in any degree to be attributed to any superiority of the modern intellect, is a supposition too unlimited to deserve a moment's attention. No human intellect has been more vast, more penetrating, and more active than that, not merely of Aristotle himself, but of philosopher after philosopher who wasted his powers in perfectly

insoluble abstract questions or in the sterilities of scholastic disputation. We may remark, too, as a strong confirmation of the truth of the above, that, in those sciences which are independent of experiments and proceed by the efforts of contemplation and reasoning alone—as theology, for example, or pure geometry—the ancients were as fully advanced, relatively speaking, as we are at this moment. The glory of Bacon is founded upon an union of speculative power with practical utility which had never been so combined before. He neglected nothing as too small, despised nothing as too low, by which our happiness could be augmented: in him, above all, were combined boldness and prudence, the most intense enthusiasm, and the plainest common-sense. He could foresee triumphs over nature far surpassing the wildest dreams of imagination, and at the same time warn posterity against the most trifling ill consequences that would proceed from a neglect of his rules. It is probable that Bacon generally wrote the first sketch of his works in English; but he himself expressed his distrust of the employment of the vulgar tongue, and afterwards translated them into what he considered the more permanent form of Latin, the language of science and even of diplomacy. He is reported to have employed the services of many young men of learning as secretaries and translators: among these the most remarkable was Hobbes, afterwards so celebrated as the author of the *Leviathan*. The style in which the Latin books of the *Instauratio* were given to the world, although certainly no model of classical purity, is weighty, vigorous, and picturesque.

Bacon's preference for Latin.

§ 13. At the same time, Bacon's English writings, if short, are very numerous; and among them unquestionably the most important is the little volume of *Essays*, the first edition of which he published in 1597. It was reprinted several times with additions, and, in its final form, appeared in 1625. These are short papers on an immense variety of subjects, from grave questions of morals and policy down to the arts of amusement and the most trifling accomplishments; and in them appears, in a manner far more easily grasped by ordinary intellects than the style of his elaborate philosophical works, that wonderful union of depth and variety which characterises Bacon. The intellectual activity which they display is literally portentous; and their immense multiplicity and aptness of unexpected illustration only finds its own level in the originality with which Bacon manages to treat the most worn-out and commonplace subject, such, for instance, as friendship or gardening. No author was ever so concise as Bacon; and in his mode of writing there is that remarkable quality which gives to the style of his greatest contemporary, Shakespeare, so strongly marked an individuality—that is, a combination of intellect and imagination, the closest reasoning in the boldest metaphor, the condensed brilliancy of

Bacon's "Essays" (1597).

an illustration identified with the development of thought. It is this that renders both the dramatist and the philosopher at once the richest and the most concise of writers. Many of Bacon's essays—the inimitable discourse on Studies, for example—are absolutely oppressive from the amount of thought which they condense into the closest possible compass. He wrote also a Latin essay on *The Wisdom of the Ancients* (1609) in which, endeavouring to explain the political and moral truths concealed in the mythology of the classical ages, he exhibits an ingenuity which Macaulay characterises as almost morbid; an unfinished romance, *The New Atlantis* (1627), which was intended to embody his own dreams of a philosophical millennium; a *History of Henry VII* (1622); and a vast number of state papers, judicial decisions, and other professional writings. All these are marked by the same vigorous, weighty, and rather ornamented style which is to be found in the *Instauratio*, and are among the finest specimens of the English language at the period of its highest majesty and perfection.

Lesser works.

§ 14. In every nation there may be found a small number of writers who, in their life, in the objects of their studies, and in the form and manner of their productions, bear an obvious stamp of eccentricity. No country has been more prolific in such exceptional individualities than England, and in no age so much as in the sixteenth century and the years immediately following. There cannot be a more striking example of this small and curious class than the famous ROBERT BURTON, whose character and writings were equally odd. He was a native of Leicestershire, and went to school at Sutton Coldfield. He was an undergraduate at Brasenose, and obtained a studentship at Christ Church in 1599. The greater part of his life was passed at Oxford in reading and digesting what he read. He held the living of St. Thomas the Martyr in Oxford; and, during part of his life was vicar of Walesby, in the Lincolnshire Wolds, and rector of Segrave, near Loughborough. He probably seldom visited either of these two last. It was at Oxford that he died. His death gave rise to several foolish rumours. His belief in astrology, and the fact that he had cast his own horoscope, produced the story that he committed suicide in order that his death might tally with his own predictions. Others said, more vaguely, that he fell a victim to that melancholy which he had so minutely described, overlooking the fact that his idea of melancholy was far more humorous and embraced much more than the traditional meaning given to the word. *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, first published in 1621, and purporting to be written by "Democritus, junior," is a strange combination of the most extensive and out-of-the-way reading with a great power of observation and a peculiar kind of grave saturnine humour. The object of the

ROBERT BURTON (1577–1640).

"The Anatomy of Melancholy" (1621).

writer was to give a complete monograph upon melancholy, to point out its causes, its symptoms, its treatment, and its cure: but the descriptions given of its various phases are written in so curious and pedantic a style, accompanied by so great a variety of quaint observation, and illustrated by such a mass of quotations from a crowd of authors, principally those medical writers of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries of whom to-day not one man in a thousand has ever heard, that the *Anatomy* possesses an irresistible charm for anyone who has once fallen under its fascination. The enormous amount of curious quotation with which Burton has encrusted almost every paragraph and line of his work has rendered him the favourite study of some who wish to appear learned at a small expense; and his pages have served as a quarry from which a multitude of authors have borrowed, often without any acknowledgment, much of their material, just as the great Roman feudal families plundered the Coliseum to construct their frowning fortress-palaces. Burton's tomb in Christ Church bears the astrological scheme of his own nativity, and an inscription eminently characteristic of the man: "Hic jacet Democritus, junior, cui vitam dedit et mortem melancholia"—and this, perhaps, has had something to do with the misconceptions about his end.

§ 15. Our notice of the prose writers of this remarkable period would be incomplete without the mention of two distinguished philosophers. By far the less important of these is EDWARD HERBERT, LORD HERBERT OF CHERBURY, the elder brother of George Herbert. His curious and, so far as regards its detail, extravagant autobiography was brought to light (1764) by Horace Walpole; and, although an interesting piece of reading, is not very remarkable as a masterpiece of style. Lord Herbert himself was a man of fashion, and was employed in the diplomatic service. From 1619 to 1624, with a short interval, he was ambassador at Paris. At the end of his life he deserted the Royalist party and joined the Roundheads in a most discreditable way. It was during his life in Paris that he published his chief work, the *De Veritate* (1624), which, with its sequels, was an elaborate pleading in favour of Deism, of which he was one of the earliest partisans in England. He also wrote a *Life of Henry VIII* (1649), not published till after his death, which is certainly a valuable monument of grave and vigorous prose, although its historical merit is diminished by the author's strong partiality in favour of Henry's character. Although by profession a freethinker, Lord Herbert gives indications of an intensely enthusiastic religious mysticism; and there is proof that he imagined himself, on more than one occasion, the object of miraculous communications by which the Deity confirmed the doctrines maintained in his books.

LORD HERBERT OF CHERBURY (1583–1648).

But in force of demonstration and clearness and precision of language, none of the English metaphysicians have surpassed

THOMAS HOBBES, whose work really belongs to the latest period of Caroline prose. Hobbes was a man of extraordinary mental activity, and, during the whole of his long life, was as remarkable for the power as for the variety of his philosophical speculations. His theories had an incalculable influence on the opinions, not only of English, but also of continental thinkers, for nearly a century; and, although, since then, that influence has been much weakened by the errors and sophistries which are mingled in many of Hobbes' works, and undermine his authority in some important and arduous branches of abstract speculation —the great question of free-will and necessity is a case in point—it is doubtful whether any later investigations have thrown new light upon the principles established by him. He was born at Malmesbury in Wiltshire, and was educated, from 1603 to 1608, at Magdalen Hall, Oxford; after which he travelled abroad as tutor to William Cavendish, son of the future first Earl of Devonshire. On his return, he became intimate, through the Cavendish family's influence, with the most distinguished men of his day. His pupil succeeded his father as Earl of Devonshire in 1626, but lived only two years: it was in the year of his death, 1628, that Hobbes dedicated to him his translation (1629) of Thucydides. Subsequently, as tutor to the third Earl of Devonshire, he passed some years in France and Italy, where he was in constant communication with the most illustrious scientists of his time—for example, Descartes, Galileo, and Harvey. His life was, however, uneventful: in 1646 he became mathematical tutor to Charles II, who gave him a pension at the Restoration; but, from his final return to England in 1653 till his death in 1679, he lived at Chatsworth, enjoying the protection of the Devonshire family. His books were very numerous. After the Thucydides came his *De Cive*, printed privately in 1642 and not published in full till 1647. In 1650 appeared an English essay *On Human Nature* and the Latin treatise *De Corpore Politico*, which was enlarged in 1655 and translated into English in 1656. The famous *Leviathan*, incorporating much of the material of the two preceding works, came out in 1651. Its arguments on free-will were attacked by Bramhall, then Bishop of Derry; and Hobbes answered his critic in a *Letter of Liberty and Necessity*, which was published in 1654. In 1655 he entered upon a futile mathematical controversy, which lasted more than twenty years, with Dr. John Wallis, who held the Savilian chair of Geometry at Oxford. His collected works were brought out at Amsterdam in 1668. Four years later, at the age of eighty-four, he wrote a curious Latin poem on his own life, and, in 1674–5 he published a verse translation of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. His *Behemoth*, a history of the Civil War from 1640 to 1660, appeared surreptitiously in 1679. None of his books, however, can compare with the *Leviathan*,

THOMAS HOBBES (1588–1679).

Life.

a treatise in favour of monarchical government, whose arguments, however, may be applied with equal force to the defence of despotism. Although Hobbes was extremely bold in speculation, his predilections took this turn because he held that since, in his opinion, human nature was essentially ferocious and corrupt, the iron restraint of arbitrary power was alone sufficient to bridle its passions. This theory naturally flowed from the fundamental principle of his moral system—viz. that the *primum mobile* of all our actions is selfish interest. Attributing every action, then, to intellectual calculation, and thus either entirely ignoring or not allowing sufficient influence to the moral elements and affections, which play at least an equal part in the drama of life, Hobbes fell into so narrow and one-sided a view of our motives that his theory is only half true. His reading was not extensive, but was singularly profound : and in the various branches of science and literature which he cultivated we see that clearness of view and vigour of comprehension which is often found in men of few books. The treatise *On Human Nature* and the *Letter of Liberty and Necessity*, are, of all his works, incontestably the two in which the closeness of his logic and the purity and clearness of his style are most visible, and the correctness of his deductions are least mingled with error. His two purely political treatises, which we have mentioned as containing, in their Latin form, the elements of *Leviathan*, are remarkable for the cogency of their arguments, although many of the results at which the author struggles to arrive are now no longer considered capable of deduction from the premises. Hobbes often has been confounded with the enemies of religion. This is the result of a misconception of his doctrines, which are indeed materialistic, but neither professedly atheistic nor in antagonism to Christian theology. And, although Hobbes' ethical principles are in his own case partly the offspring of a cold and timorous disposition, nevertheless, the selfish theory of human actions, when divested of the limitations that confine the motive of self to those low and short-sighted views of interest generally associated with it, no more necessitates an immoral line of argument than any other system intended to illustrate the mysteries of our moral nature.

The "Leviathan" (1651).

Hobbes' ethical position.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

(1.) *The Prose Translators.*

The part which was played by the translators in the formation of English literature already has been pointed out: their influence on English prose too often has been underrated. The work of translation was not marked by any process of selection, and much of the result shows, as we might reasonably expect, a lack of literary art. But it is a mistake to imagine that the net outcome of all this labour was merely a supply of stories which furnished the dramatists with plots for their plays. Even the story-books show, in many cases, a sense of the value of style, a harmony in the arrangement of their sentences, which places them high in the earliest chapter of modern prose. Further, of the manifold intellectual tendencies of the Elizabethan age, there was hardly one which was not, in one way or another, controlled or helped by the work of the translators. SIR THOMAS HOBY'S (1530–1566) translation of Castiglione's treatise, *Il Cortegiano* (*The Courtier*), published in 1561, was among the works which settled the standard of conduct in Elizabeth's Court, represented, on the side of accomplishments, by Sidney and Ralegh; and on the side of sheer intellectual vigour, by statesmen like Burghley. This influence must not be taken as immediate and direct, for a single book cannot be said to change the spirit of a whole age: but, just as Castiglione's book—the mirror of Italian society during the Renaissance—was one of the means by which the principal features of those social conditions were transferred to the rest of Europe, so Hoby's translation took its part in extending its authority. There can be very little doubt that its influence on Lyly and on Euphuism generally was very considerable.

The most important translations before 1600 were those from the Italian and Spanish novelists. Late Greek and Latin romances were also turned into English—for example, THOMAS UNDERDOWN'S translation (1569?) of the *Theagenes and Chariclea* of Heliodorus of Tricca. But the most important foreign books at this time were by the long succession of Italian story-tellers, from the anonymous writer of the *Novellino* to the Renaissance novelist, Bandello, whose collection of anecdotes was, on the whole, the most popular, if we are to judge from their employment by both translators and dramatists. Bandello's novels had been published, in definitive form, in 1554: the Frenchman, François de Belleforest, had used them freely for his *Histoires Tragiques* (1559): and, doubtless, the English translators used Belleforest as much as Bandello. In 1562, ARTHUR BROKE (d. 1563) had translated one of Bandello's stories into English verse, giving it the title of *The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Julieit*, which, in its ultimate result, is familiar to every English reader. In 1566 and 1567, appeared WILLIAM PAINTER'S (1540?–1594) *Palace of Pleasure*, an admirable treasure-house of stories drawn from Bandello, Belleforest, Boccaccio, and other sources, including the *Ecatomithi* of Giraldo Cinthio, which had been published in Italian two years before (1565). BARNABE RICH, in 1581, drew upon Bandello and Cinthio for his story of *Apollonius and Silla*. In the next year (1582) GEORGE WHETSTONE (1544?–1587?), who had previously (1578) founded his *Promos and Cassandra* on the same theme, introduced a translation of one of Cinthio's romances into his *Heptameron of Civil Discourses*, a collection of tales on the usual plan of the Italian novelists and their imitators.

Again, in 1590, we find a book of tales called *Tarlton's News out of Purgatory*, which purports to come from the ghost of Richard Tarlton, the famous comic actor, then two years dead. These are all, of course, popular adaptations rather than translations, but the amount of original work in them is a hardly perceptible minimum. The translation of Spanish novelists was more seriously undertaken. Pedro Mexia's novel of *Timur* was translated in Fortescue's *Forest* (1571), from which it was taken by Marlowe for the foundation of *Tamburlaine the Great*. The *Diana Enamorada* of Montemayor, which Sidney had already laid under contribution for his *Arcadia*, was twice translated between 1595 and 1600, first, in manuscript, by THOMAS WILSON; secondly (1598), by BARTHOLOMEW YOUNG. Cervantes appeared in English in THOMAS SHELTON'S translation (1612), seven years later than the original. Of other foreign authors, Rabelais, in the quaint and admirable translation of SIR THOMAS URQUHART (1611–1660), came out in 1653. This, which was completed by P. A. Motteux and others in 1708, is somewhat beyond the scope of our present period. Similarly, Machiavelli, whose influence on the political life of the period was so considerable, was not seen in English till 1640, when EDWARD DACRES translated *The Prince* and one or two of the miscellaneous essays, such as the life of Castruccio Castracane. Up till that time, his work must have been known either from the Italian editions (first in 1532), the four Latin editions, or Guillaume Cappel's French translation (1553).

The finest English translation of a classical author appeared in 1579, and again, in its second edition, in 1595. This was the *Plutarch* of SIR THOMAS NORTH (1535?–1601?), which, for the splendid vigour and severity of its style, must be reckoned the chief contribution to English prose before Hooker. North cannot be said to be a plain writer: the height of his subject and its antiquity drove him, not unwillingly, into intricacies of construction and a somewhat confused disregard of his periods: and one is hardly surprised that his *Plutarch*, in the eighteenth century, became obsolete and was supplanted by the perspicuous but commonplace translation of the brothers Langhorne. It is also to be noted that he translated, not from the Greek, but from the French of Jacques Amyot. Had North, however, been an original author instead of a translator, his fame among the writers of Elizabeth's reign would be equal to that of Hooker; and, for the student of English prose, his position is not dissimilar. His most important follower in classical translation was the voluminous PHILEMON HOLLAND (1552–1637), fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, who, beside his famous version of Livy (1600), translated everything else he could lay his hands on, including Camden's *Britannia* (1610).

Another great Elizabethan was JOHN FLORIO (1553?–1625), whose parents were refugees from the Valtellina. Florio lived in England all his life, and was in touch with the chief literary men of his day. He was a singular Euphuist, and shared in the strained eccentricities of his tribe — the love for punning and other affectations. But his translation of Montaigne's Essays, published, twenty-three years after the original, in 1603, although it is not free from some pedantry of this kind, is, in one way, the ideal of a translation. It is fluent, and at the same time literal: but, above everything else, Florio has managed to catch the very spirit of Montaigne and to reproduce it in an exact facsimile, with just that amount of freedom which emphasises his own individuality. No writer has probably been so handled by a thoroughly congenial spirit as Montaigne has been handled by Florio. This admirable work is now accessible to the student in several popular editions; and, as a specimen of Elizabethan translation, he can find nothing that can excel it. Florio's Italian dictionary, *A World of Words*, was first published in 1598.

(2.) *The Pamphleteers.*

The most important feature in the ordinary prose-writing of the day is furnished by the pamphleteers. The most famous of these were, with more glory to their reputation, concerned in the foundation of the English drama, and their names will be found in their proper place. The pamphlets, which exist in immense numbers, do not in any sense connect themselves with the splendid traditions of Elizabethan prose: but they are most important in their exhibition of the copious vocabulary of the age. More definitely literary than any are the Euphuistic dialogues and romances, in which John Lyly was followed by Robert Greene and Thomas Lodge, to say nothing of lesser writers. Again, there were the numerous semi-religious pamphlets, like Greene's *Groats-worth of Wit*, in which the egregious sinners of the age openly lamented their wickedness—perhaps very sincerely for the time being. Thomas Dekker, the dramatist, was very fertile in prose work of this kind; and his *Gull's Horn-Book* and *Seven Deadly Sins of London* are, with his plays, an invaluable addition to our knowledge of London life at this period. But by far the most interesting of all the pamphlets are those concerned with literary and religious controversies. These masterpieces of scurrilous abuse—not by any means without humour—were written by University men whose education had in every case been excellent. THOMAS NASH (1567–1601), for example, was a Cambridge man. He, like Greene, wrote plays: but certainly his reputation stands upon the ground of the pamphlet. No one has ever shown so brilliant a genius for calling names as this contentious scholar. Attention to grammar was not requisite in a style like Nash's: the *sine quâ non* was to be voluble, expressive, and vivid; to know how to ring changes on the most offensive phrases, to insert adroit epithets here and there, and to keep up a breathless and perpetual strain of abuse. There is plenty of Latin in these pamphlets, plenty of Euphuised Italian and Spanish—plenty, too, of gutter-English. Nash's most famous achievement is his attack upon Spenser's friend, the exclusive arbiter of taste with a certain clique, the bombastic and frigid Gabriel Harvey. The only reason for this onslaught could have been that Nash was annoyed by the good conceit which Harvey certainly had of himself and his position; and the chief argument which Nash used was the fact that his adversary's father had been a rope-maker at Saffron Walden. On this ground, however, he constructed a splendid edifice of abuse, to which Harvey, with less humour and a less versatile command of English, was incapable of replying coherently. One would think, after reading *Have with you to Saffron Walden* (1596), that the force of invective could go no farther. But the choicest flowers of language belong to the Martin Marprelate controversy, in which Nash almost certainly took a part. The history of this pamphleteering war is intricate and unprofitable. It is sufficient to say that it rose out of the great quarrel between the Puritan and Episcopalian sections of the Church, and its subject was the fruitful topic of Church government. The Episcopal order was, on the one hand, attacked (1588–9) by an anonymous writer—or syndicate of writers—who called himself Martin Marprelate, and is generally identified with a Welsh parson, one JOHN PENRY (1559–1593): on the other, it responded through the mouth of Thomas Cooper, Bishop of Winchester, and a number of other writers. John Udall, not to be confounded with the more famous Nicholas Udall, Provost of Eton, took an early part in the controversy on the Puritan side, and died (1592) in the prison to which he was sent in consequence of his unruly action. The dispute raged hotly from 1588 to 1590, the Martinists evading their pursuers by carrying their printing-press about the country; and it finally died—unfortunately, only in the form of pamphlets—of sheer exhaustion. As might be expected, the point of these pamphlets lies, not in their theological discrimination—although

their religious allusions are plentiful and indecent—but in the extraordinary energy of their personal attacks on the leading men of each party. No more instructive comment on the strangely contradictory spirit of the day can be found than the historical link which unites these monuments of vulgar pasquinade with the great defence of the Anglican position embodied in Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*.

(3.) *The Historians, etc.*

The histories of this age are plentiful, but have no degree of interest. One of the earliest of these is the *Abridgement of the Chronicles of England* (1562), by RICHARD GRAFTON (d. 1572?), a printer, and the editor and continuator of Hall's *Chronicle*. He was thrown into prison for printing the proclamation of Lady Jane Grey's succession to the throne. Later on (1568) he published a *Chronicle* compiled from older historians. Of the chief chroniclers who succeeded him, and of Stow, his contemporary, and the object of his constant attacks, we have spoken in the text. In connection with them should be mentioned WILLIAM HARRISON (1534–1593), whose *Description of England* (1577) belongs to the *Universal Cosmography* projected and begun by Reginald Wolfe, the Queen's printer, and appeared in front of Holinshed's *Chronicle*. The book is full of value to the student of English manners and customs. Harrison also translated Bellenden's Scottish version of Hector Boece into English, and compiled a *Great Chronology* in manuscript.

GEORGE BUCHANAN (1506–1582) wrote his History of Scotland (*Rerum Scoticarum Historia*, 1582) in Latin. He was one of the most learned men of his age, and had studied at St. Andrews and Paris. In 1569 the Council of Regency appointed him tutor to the young James VI. In addition to his history and other Latin prose works, he made a metrical Latin version of the Psalms, and satirised the Secretary Maitland of Lethington in *Chameleon*, a piece of vernacular prose. His translation of the Psalms found a rival in the next century (1637) in that made by ARTHUR JOHNSTON (1587–1641), physician to Charles I.

SIR JOHN HAYWARD (1564?–1627) published (1599) *The First Part of the Life and Reign of King Henry IV*, dedicated to the Earl of Essex. Elizabeth was offended by the book, and threw the author into prison; but James I afterwards patronised and knighted him. His subsequent histories were *The Lives of the Three Norman Kings of England, William I, William II, and Henry I* (1613), which he dedicated to Charles, Prince of Wales; and *The Life and Reign of King Edward VI, with the beginning of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, which was published after his death (1630).

RICHARD KNOLLES (d. 1610), master of the grammar school at Sandwich in Kent, published (1603) a *History of the Turks*, which Johnson highly extolled in the *Rambler*. "He has displayed all the excellencies that narrative can admit. His style, though somewhat obscured by time, and vitiated by false wit, is pure, nervous, elevated, and clear. Nothing could have sunk this author into obscurity but the remoteness and barbarity of the people he relates." The history was continued by the dramatist Thomas Nabbes.

In 1612 and 1617 SAMUEL DANIEL, the poet, published two parts of a *History of England from the Conquest to the Reign of Edward III*. Hallam's criticism is well worth quoting: "It is written with a freedom from all stiffness, and a purity of style, which hardly any other work of so early a date exhibits. These qualities are indeed so remarkable that it would require a good deal of critical observation to distinguish it even from writings of the reign of Anne; and where it differs from them, (I speak only of the secondary class of works, which have not much individuality of manner,) it is by a more select idiom, and by an absence of the Gallicism or vulgarity which are often found in that age."

Another species of history is represented by the *Britannia* (1586) of WILLIAM CAMDEN (1551–1623), head master of Westminster School and Clarenceux King-at-Arms. As a topographical description of Great Britain from the earliest times, the *Britannia* forms one of the most valuable sources of antiquarian knowledge. Camden endowed a historical chair at Oxford, and was the patron of Ben Jonson in his early years. He also wrote a Latin history of the reign of Elizabeth, which was published in 1615.

A later antiquary of some eminence was SIR HENRY SPELMAN (1564?–1641), who published in Latin various works upon legal and ecclesiastical antiquities. One of the principal of these is a history of the English Councils, which began to appear in 1639, and was continued (1664) under the editorship of Sir William Dugdale.

In addition to the collectors of travellers' tales, many private gentlemen of this period left accounts of their travels. The Scotchman, WILLIAM LITHGOW (1582–1645?), brought out a book in 1614, which, in a greatly enlarged form (1632), described nineteen years of travelling on foot through Europe, Asia, and Africa. GEORGE SANDYS (1578–1644), the youngest son of Edwin Sandys, Archbishop of York, wrote an account (1615) of his Travels in the East, which was very popular, and was repeatedly published in the seventeenth century. He also produced a metrical version of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (1621–6).

GEORGE PUTTENHAM'S (d. 1590) *Art of English Poesy* (1589) is the chief critical work of Elizabeth's reign. It is not by any means the only work of its kind. Gascoigne had furnished instruction in the difficult art in 1575; and Sir Philip Sidney wrote the work eventually known as *The Defence of Poesy* about 1579; and, besides these, a number of lesser writers had debated the question of quantity *versus* accent and rhyme. Puttenham's book is not very valuable as prose, but it shows a very enlightened attitude towards the disputed standard of poetry; and, without doubt, it had its share in the rejection of Gabriel Harvey's uncouth attempt to naturalise Latin prosody in England, and in settling the elastic criterion of Elizabethan poetry.

Although JOHN SELDEN (1584–1654), that "gulf of learning," the friend of Camden and Ben Jonson, and by far the most learned of Elizabethan jurists, is scarcely of the number of the historians, yet his *Table-Talk* (1689), published long after his death, gives him a place among those men of letters whose mere conversation has contributed something to literature. The *Table-Talk* is an anthology of his wit and wisdom, and is intensely valuable as the revelation of a mind whose whole course of thought was directed and strengthened by the political and religious spirit of England immediately after the Reformation. Selden's remaining works are very voluminous, and are chiefly in Latin.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DAWN OF THE DRAMA.

§ 1. Origin of the Drama. The *Mysteries*, or *Miracle-plays*. § 2. The *Moralities*. § 3. The *Interludes*: JOHN HEYWOOD. § 4. Pageants. Latin plays. § 5. Chronicle-plays. BALE'S *Kynge Johan*. First English tragedies: *Gorboduc*. § 6. First English comedies: *Ralph Roister Doister* and *Gammer Gurton's Needle*. § 7. Actors. Theatres. Scenery and properties of the stage. § 8. Dramatic authors usually actors. § 9. Early English playwrights: LYLY; PEELE; GREENE; NASH; LODGE; KYD. § 10. MARLOWE. § 11. Anonymous plays.

§ 1. THE Drama, although it receives, as a whole, very little study, is, in a certain sense, the most remarkable and perhaps the most intensely national department of our literature; and consequently its origin and development were peculiar, and totally different from anything to be found in the history of other European countries. Spain and England alone, among all the modern and civilised nations, possess a theatrical literature independent in its origin, characteristic in its form, and faithfully reflecting the features, moral, social, and intellectual, of the people among whom it arose; and, since there is a strong national distinction between the Spaniard and Englishman, it is natural that the character of Spanish drama has little in common with the drama of England, save a similar element of romance. It is possible to trace the earliest origin of our own stage to a period not very long subsequent to the Norman Conquest: for the custom of representing episodes from biblical History and the lives of the Saints in a rude dramatic form seems to have been introduced from France, and to have been employed by the clergy as a means of communicating religious instruction to the rude populace of the Anglo-Norman epoch. Such religious spectacles, from the sacred nature of their subject and *dramatis personæ*, were called *Mysteries* or *Miracles*: the earliest of whose representation we have record is the Mystery of St. Katharine, composed by Geoffrey, master of the convent school at St. Albans, for performance by his pupils at Dunstable Priory. Its date was probably about 1110. Geoffrey, whose house was burned the night after the play, took Holy

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Orders, and became Abbot of St. Albans in 1119. The play itself consisted, so far as we know, of a series of scenes representing the miracles and martyrdom of the saint, and was performed on the festival commemorating her death (Nov. 25, in our calendar). In an age when the great mass of the laity, from the highest to the lowest, was in a state of extreme ignorance, and the little learning of the day was confined to the Church, it was quite natural that the governing class of ecclesiastics should employ so obvious a means of communicating elementary religious instruction to the people, and so, by gratifying the curiosity of their rude hearers, extend and strengthen the Church's influence. Obviously, the form and spirit of these mysteries were derived from the Church's ritual.

Connection of the Mysteries with the Church's ritual.

Plays like this of St. Katharine were applications and extensions of the principle which gave so realistic and dramatic a character to the services of Holy Week and Easter—the Palm Sunday procession, the office of *Tenebræ*, the Washing of the Feet on Maundy Thursday, the deposition of the Host in the Easter Sepulchre, and the "dry masses" of Good Friday and Easter Even. In the hymns proper to these services a species of dramatic colloquy was freely used—*e.g.* in the *Gloria Laus et Honor* of Palm Sunday, the long Reproaches of Good Friday, and the Sequence of Easter Day (*Victimæ paschali*), part of which is a dialogue between the Maries and the apostles. The Mystery was a further attempt to popularise all this—to draw people to the Church by providing them with religious amusement. Sometimes the Mystery was brought bodily into the services themselves: for example, the famous Procession of the Ass, with its hymn *Orientis partibus*, was nothing but a scene from a Miracle-play inserted into the ordinary office. A further means to the popularity of these performances was the language in which they were written. It is supposed, although it is by no means certain, that Abbot Geoffrey's Dunstable play was written in French, in a language which would be clearly understood, and that the words and action of the piece were thus intelligible to the audience. It is no wonder, then, that these plays grew in popular favour. Not only in England, but in the early literature of other European countries, Mysteries and Miracle-plays abound. Spain, Germany, France, and Italy possess examples so abundant that their collection would form a considerable library. In deeply religious countries like Spain such plays had a very important influence, which popularly survives in the Holy Week processions at Seville and the ceremonies of holy days, and especially of Corpus Christi Day, throughout the country: their literary influence is seen in the *Autos sacramentales* of Calderon and other writers, composed for the great festival of the Blessed Sacrament. Professor Courthope points out, in his chapter on the subject,

Mysteries written in the vulgar tongue.

Festival of Corpus Christi

that the institution of this festival in 1264, and its revival by the Council of Vienne in 1311, proved the eventual safeguard of these Mysteries, which had then passed more or less from the hands of the clergy, and were becoming objects of clerical suspicion. "This festival," he says, "now became as popular and as splendid as the Dionysia at Athens": and so, just as the Athenian drama was intimately connected with religious observances, so the elements of English drama formed no small part of a pious celebration. It will appear natural enough that, on any of the high feasts of the Church, or on the anniversary of any important saint or religious event, the saint or the occurrence should be represented in a visible form, with such details as either Holy Scripture, legend, or the author's imagination could supply. The earliest Mysteries were composed for Christmas and Easter, and thus form two distinct cycles. To the childish and straightforward art of these dramatists of the convent there was no impropriety in the strict and literal copying of every circumstance in the original narrative which they dramatised; and the simple faith of their audience saw no irreverence in the introduction of the highest supernatural beings—the Trinity and the orders of angels. Indeed, the spectators saw nothing which detracted at all from the sanctity of the drama. It was, in the first place, at any rate, composed by monks and acted by monks; the cathedral was transformed, in many instances, into a theatre; the stage, a species of graduated platform in three divisions rising one over the other, was placed near or above the high altar; and the costumes were furnished from the rich vestry of the church. This is the case with the Strasburg Miracle-play which Longfellow inserted in his *Golden Legend*; and his evidence may be received as the trustworthy authority of a writer well acquainted with this species of literature. At Florence the Duomo, which, like Old St. Paul's or the Cathedral of Amiens, was the centre and symbol of the common civic life, was used for this purpose, and the Florentine representations of Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise suggested the primary conception and shape of Dante's great poem and, to a certain extent, its title—the *Divine Comedy*. Taking this into account, we find in Dante's work a link which proves the somewhat obvious connection between the Miracle-play and the medieval allegory-poem—between the dogmatic early drama and the essential dogmatism, sacred or profane, of figurative poetry. The stage arrangements were simple: the three platforms into which the stage was divided represented Heaven, Earth, and Hell; and the *dramatis personæ* made their appearance on that part of the stage corresponding with their nature. This combination of the supernatural and human is illustrated by medieval pictures and sculpture, and by the stained glass of all ages. Such admirable compositions as the sculptures which remain above

Dramatisation and scope of the Mysteries.

the doorways of Bourges and Chartres Cathedrals, with their almost perfect arrangement and wealth of detail, were no doubt aided by the reminiscence and recurrence of the local Mysteries, and, in their turn, help us to realise the way in which these pieces were represented. In England, however, the staging seems to have been even more simple. It was absolutely necessary that some comic element should be introduced to enliven the graver scenes, and especially in pieces of inordinate length. One play, founded on the Creation and the Fall of Man, occupied six days in the performance. Some alleviation was needed; and, considering the rude civilisation of the audience, some farcical or amusing element was absolutely required. This was found in the easy expedient of placing the wicked personages of the drama, whether human or spiritual, in ludicrous situations, or surrounded by ludicrous accompaniments. Thus the Devil generally played the part of clown or jester, and was exhibited in a humour half terrific and half burlesque. But the audience were not contented with the amusement which it extracted from the grotesque gambols and defeated machinations of Satan and his imps, or with the mixture of merriment and horror inspired by horns, and tails, and hairy faces, and howling mouths; and so the authors of the piece introduced human buffoons. The modern puppet-play of Punch and Judy, with its struggle between Punch and the Devil, is unquestionably a direct survival of those miracle-plays in which the Evil One was alternately the conqueror and victim of the Buffoon or Jester. This human clown was also called the Vice, a term which is used in Shakespeare with this allusion. It is easy to see that these ludicrous episodes, introduced to enliven the severity of a sacred tragedy, kept a conventional hold upon the drama. The necessity of relieving tragic gloom in some such way produced the Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*, and was responsible for the feeble and unreadable comic interludes in Massinger's plays and Ford's tragedies.

Place of the Devil in the Mysteries.

Some idea of these ancient religious dramas may be formed from the titles of some of them which have been preserved. These are, for the most part, Corpus Christi dramas. The importance of the Corpus Christi festival has been mentioned above; it was the nursing-mother of English drama. The twelfth-century Miracle-plays had been performed in church and by clergy. A gradual process of secularisation had taken place. With the introduction of secular performers, the Mysteries passed from the church to the churchyard, and so into the streets. In the fourteenth century they were transferred to the care of pious laymen, the members of confraternities and guilds. The guild itself was a far-reaching organisation, and the performance of these plays represented its religious side of action. Like the Spanish *Cofradias*, the guilds and confraternities arranged their Corpus

Extant miracle-plays.

Christi processions and their Corpus Christi dramas: the stage now became portable and was set up in the street, the actors robing in a hollow space beneath it, which communicated with the upper story by a trap-door. The chief plays of this type which remain to us are the Corpus Christi Mysteries of York, Wakefield, and Coventry, and the Whitsuntide plays of Chester. Of these the most interesting are the Wakefield plays, generally known as the Towneley Mysteries, from the name of the family which long possessed the original MSS. They belong to various periods of the fourteenth century, and contain strong traces of the influence of the contemporary York plays, but have far more local colour and characteristic humour. They are supposed to have been performed at Woodkirk Fair, near Wakefield. York was the centre of dramatic influence in the North; while Chester was the dramatic metropolis of the West and North-West, and made its influence felt in the Dublin Mysteries. The so-called Coventry plays in the Cottonian MSS. are of the fifteenth century, and are assumed to have been acted by the Franciscans of the town. Of the guild-plays of Coventry we have only two left, and their text is fragmentary and corrupt. The Creation, the Fall, the Story of Cain and Abel, the Deluge, the Massacre of the Innocents, and the Crucifixion; these, and the lives of the saints, were the materials of these simple dramas. They are generally written in mixed prose and verse, and, although abounding in anachronisms and absurdities both of character and dialogue, they sometimes contain passages of simple and natural pathos, and sometimes scenes which must have affected the spectators with intense awe and reverence. In the Wakefield Miracle-plays a comic scene is produced by the refusal of Noah's wife to enter the ark, and by the beating which justly terminates her resistance and scolding. On the other hand, the same plays contain a pathetic dialogue between Abraham and Isaac, which may be compared with a similar dialogue in a contemporary Suffolk Mystery; and mysteries which surrounded the Holy Sacrament must, in spite of comic scenes, have produced a strong impression in an age of childlike, ardent faith. The staging of these spectacles was as magnificent as possible, and every expedient was employed to increase the illusion of the scene. Thus there is a tradition that a condemned criminal was actually crucified on the stage as the penitent thief. Medieval art is a sufficient proof of the strength of this illusion. The Deity is often represented in the costume of a Pope or Bishop: this, which appears to modern minds somewhat irreverent anthropomorphism, was looked upon then as quite the reverse. The Deity of the play was clothed in splendid vestments, which were thus associated with the highest ideas of reverence. Again, the innumerable anecdotes in which evil spirits are represented as baffled and defeated by a very moderate amount of cunning and dex-

English Mysteries.

terity may easily have found their origin in the peculiar tenets then current with respect to evil spirits. The personality of the Devil, as pictured by the Christian of the Middle Ages, was not that of a terrible and awful being, but of a mischievous goblin whose power had been annihilated by our Lord's resurrection.

Survivals of the Mysteries.

To trace the gradual changes which connect the regular drama of modern times with the early Mysteries of the twelfth century is simply to point out the steps by which the dramatic art, diverging from its exclusively religious character, acquired more and more of a secular spirit in its subjects and in the personages who took part in it. The Mystery, once the only form of dramatic representation, continued to be popular up to the end of the fourteenth century: and even now, in some pastoral and remote corners of Europe, where the primitive faith is still simple, fervent, and untouched by casuistry, and the manners of the people have been little modified by contact with foreign civilisation, the Mystery, with very little alteration, is still retained. In the retired valleys of Switzerland, in the Tyrol, and in some seldom visited districts in Germany, the peasants still annually perform a series of dramatic *tableaux* representing episodes in the life of Christ. The famous Ober-Ammergau Passion-play sets forth the whole scheme of Redemption by that employment of type and antitype which was so conspicuous a feature in all the great medieval schemes of religious decoration, and is found in the structure of the old English Mysteries. Another survival, or rather adaptation, of the Miracle-play, is found in a work so consonant with modern feeling as Wagner's *Parsifal*. But, in the later Mysteries, we observe a distinct change of attitude, a tendency to symbolical rather than literal representation, which infallibly opens the way to a wider conception of the art. This is especially the case with the Franciscan plays of Coventry.

Moralities.

The *Morality*, as it is called, the first step in the secularisation of the drama, grew naturally out of the Mystery, and eventually, about the beginning of the fifteenth century, supplanted it. The great age of monasticism was over; the spirit of the new era was essentially secular; the monopoly of learning was gradually passing out of the hands of ecclesiastics; the layman was full of fresh mercantile energy, and was waking up to a new intelligence. Moreover, the lay mind, naturally devout, was shocked by the unfortunate events of the Papal Captivity at Avignon and the Great Schism which followed, and, not only in England, but in every country, a certain hostility to the existing state of the Church and a desire for reform abounded. Abroad, these opinions were expressed by Petrarch and a long succession of lay authors: in England, the spirit found its chief outlet in the Moralities. Even when these works were the production of Churchmen like Bishop Bale, their authors did not stand as examples

of the mind of the Church, but were strongly tainted with the unorthodox and rationalistic views of the early Reformers. The subjects of these dramas were not directly sacred, but were intended to convey a religious moral by means of symbolism and by the employment of an abstract or allegorical action and *dramatis personæ*. In short, the allegorical spirit which is seen in the poems of Lydgate and the school of Chaucer receives in the Moralities its dramatised version. Instead of the Deity and His angels, the Saints, the Patriarchs, and the characters of the Old and New Testament, the persons who figure in the Moralities are Every-Man—a general type or expression of humanity—Lusty Juventus—who represents the follies and weaknesses of youth—Good Counsel, Repentance, Gluttony, Pride, Avarice, and the like. The great weakness of the Morality was that, in taking general abstractions for its *dramatis personæ*, it either gave them so much individuality that their real intention was concealed, or so little that they were dull abstract qualities and nothing more. The action was in general exceedingly simple, and the tone grave and doctrinal, although, of course, there still existed the old necessity for the introduction of comic scenes. The Devil was far too popular and useful a personage to be suppressed; and his battles and scoldings with the Vice or Clown were still retained to furnish forth "a fit of mirth." Thus certain likenesses to the Mystery remained, certain distinctions from it were adopted. But the leading difference between the Mystery and the Morality is, to quote Professor Courthope, that "while the Miracle-play merely exhibits a series of isolated scenes, in illustration of a doctrinal thesis, the Morality works out the purpose of its allegory by means of a continuous plot."

Characteristics of the Moralities.

Several of these Moralities remain, working away little by little from their original purpose until they touch the border of the regular drama. The outline of one of them, *The Cradle of Security*, has been preserved in the narrative of an old man who, in his early childhood, had formed one of the audience. Its moral was addressed to careless and sensual sovereigns. Its principal personage, a king, neglecting his high duties and plunged in voluptuous pleasures, is put to sleep in a cradle. Four beautiful ladies hold the golden chains that bind him to this couch, and sing while they rock him. Suddenly there comes a terrible knock at the door; the courtiers are all scattered; and the king, awaking, finds himself in the custody of two stern and tremendous figures, sent by God to punish his voluptuousness and vice. In a similar way the action of the Morality *Lusty Juventus* contains a vivid and even humorous picture of the extravagance of a young heir, surrounded by companions, the Virtues and the Vices, each of whom attempts to attract him. The Vices, flattering his depraved inclinations, succeed, and

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the piece ends with another demonstration of the inevitable misery and punishment which follow a departure from the strict path of virtue and religion. From all this it will be seen how impossible it is to draw any but general distinctions, chronological as well as critical, between the Mystery and the Morality. The one species imperceptibly melts into the other. What those general distinctions are may be gathered from what has already been said. They resolve themselves into two heads: first, the disjointed *tableau* is abandoned for a connected plot; secondly, the *dramatis personæ* are no longer biblical but theological. But, later on, with the great change in the spirit of poetry, came a change in the history of the Morality. The courtly spirit, so conspicuous a mark of the Renaissance and Humanism, infected it, and it became hardly distinguishable from the Masque. The Elements, the Virtues, the Vices, or the Seasons and reigns of nature were introduced either to convey some physical or philosophical instruction in the guise of allegory, or to compliment the king or some great personage on a festival occasion. Of this class is Skelton's *Masque of Magnificence*. A very industrious writer of Moralities was JOHN BALE, Bishop of Ossory (1495–1563), who will presently be mentioned as one of the founders of our national drama.

§ 3. Side by side with the Moralities, and bearing a very strong general resemblance to them, grew up the *Interludes*, which nevertheless bring us considerably nearer the regular drama. The Interlude was of early growth, and one specimen can be assigned to the reign of Edward I. Such of the shorter Moralities as *Lusty Juventus*, which was written in the middle of the sixteenth century, may be counted as Interludes; for this class of composition, as its name implies, was intended to fill up the intervals between the courses of a banquet, and was therefore short and pithy. The tone of the Interlude was merry and farcical; its subject, while still adhering in some sense to religion, deserted moral theology for controversy; and, during the great dogmatic war between the Church of Rome and the Reformers, the Interlude played a very prominent part on both sides of the question. The most prolific author of these grotesque and merry pieces was JOHN HEYWOOD, who is said to have been educated at Pembroke College, Oxford, and must not be confounded with his namesake, the Cambridge man, Thomas Heywood the dramatist. He was attached to the King's person as a singer—not an official member of the royal choir—and seems to have been employed as a kind of superior jester to divert the Court with his witty buffooneries. This was in 1519. As an ardent Romanist he shared the vicissitudes of his faith, and probably died at Mechlin during the reign of Elizabeth. Nevertheless, his sense of humour led him to recognise that the

Interludes.

JOHN HEYWOOD (1497?–1580?).

Church was not altogether free from abuses, and his rhymes, rude though they are, distribute their satire with great impartiality. Three of his interludes remain, chief among them the famous *Four P's*, printed in the closing years of Henry VIII's reign, "a merry interlude of a Palmer, a Pardoner, a Potycary, and a Pedlar." The Interlude, however, was not always used so pleasantly. The Papal party were pleased to bring Luther, Katharina von Bora, and the principal reformers upon the stage in a light both hateful and ridiculous: Protestants, in their turn paid back the compliment by a satirical display of the Pope and his hierarchy. It is obvious that such a standpoint, involving a burlesque tendency, alienated the drama still further from its religious origin and the moral purpose of its later days. The connection of the Interlude with lay authors and actors placed it in a certain opposition to the Church from which it took its birth: its popularity as a courtly entertainment and as a learned pastime completed the work, and thus the drama was gradually enfranchised and entered on its independence.

§ 4. In the preceding sketch of the dramatic amusements of these early days we have endeavoured to give a general idea of these entertainments in their complete and normal form; that is, when the action selected for the subject of the piece was illustrated with dialogue, and the exhibitor addressed himself to the ears as well as the eyes of his audience. But it must not be forgotten that the subjects both of Mysteries and Moralities were sometimes represented in dumb-show. A scene of Holy Writ or some event in the life of a saint was represented in a kind of *tableau vivant* by disguised and costumed personages, and this representation was often placed on a wheeled platform and formed part of some of those long processions which formed the principal feature of ancient festivities. These *tableaux vivants* were also introduced into the great halls during the progress of elaborate and magnificent banquets; and thus this species of entertainment is inseparably connected with those pageants so often employed to gratify the vanity of citizens, or to compliment an illustrious visitor. The word "pageant" was applied originally to the stage; then each single play was called a pageant; and finally the word was confined to *tableaux*. Whether simply consisting of the exhibition, on some lofty platform, in the porch or churchyard of a cathedral, in the town-hall, or over the city gate, of a number of figures suitably dressed, or accompanying their action with poetical declamation and music, these pageants necessarily partook of all the changes of taste which characterised the age: the Prophets and Saints who welcomed the royal stranger in the thirteenth century with Latin hymns were gradually supplanted by the Virtues and allegorical qualities; and these in turn, when the Renaissance had disseminated an universal passion for classical

Pageants.

imagery, made way for the Cupids, Muses, and other classical personages whose frigid influence has left so abiding a mark on our own literature. The survival of the pageant is obvious in the processions on Lord Mayor's Day and other occasions : its use was recognised on the stage throughout the Elizabethan period, either, as in Middleton's chronicle-play, *The Mayor of Queenborough*, to fill up gaps in the course of a long story, or, as in Webster's tragedies, to heighten pity and horror by the silent representation of some awful catastrophe. Spectacles of the kind were so universal that the chronicles of every European nation are full of records of them ; and of course they were frequently exhibited at the Universities. Here they acquired a more learned character than they possessed elsewhere. In these times all students, by an almost universal rule, were obliged to use Latin on all official occasions : this was in some degree necessary owing to the multitude of *nations* composing the body of students and the consequent need of a common language. Latin, therefore, was by a thousand different laws and regulations obligatory, not only in the Universities, but also in many conventual and monastic societies. It was therefore natural that the public amusements of the University should come under this rule. A large number of pieces, written upon the models of Terence and Seneca, were produced and represented both at Oxford and Cambridge. In the great revolt against scholastic authority which preceded the Reformation the return to classical models in dramatic composition was general, and Reuchlin boasted that he was the first to furnish the youth of Germany with comedies bearing some similarity to the masterpieces of Terence. The times of Elizabeth and James I were peculiarly fertile in Latin dramas composed at the Universities ; and these sovereigns, the first a classical scholar of some eminence in an age of classical scholarship, the second a learned pedant, were entertained by the students of Oxford and Cambridge with Latin plays. Elizabeth heard plays in the hall of Christ Church, Oxford, and attended a performance of Plautus' *Amphitruo* in the antechapel of King's at Cambridge : when James visited Cambridge, a play by George Ruggle, a witty Fellow of Clare, was presented before his Majesty.

University plays.

§ 5. We have now traced the progress of dramatic art in England from its first rude infancy. Every step of this advance has removed it farther and farther from its purely religious origin, and has brought it closer and closer to a secular character. The last step was the creation of the modern dramatic idea—the scenic representation, by means of the action and dialogue of human personages, of some event of history or of social life. In the first appearance of this, the most perfect form which the art could attain, the influence of the great models of ancient literature must have been very powerful. Thus dramatic compositions class them-

Transition from the Interlude to the Drama.

selves, by the very nature of the case, into the two great categories of Tragedy and Comedy, and even borrow from the classical models details of a kind which, so far as their own structure is concerned, is unessential—as, for example, the use of the Chorus. This, originally consisting of a numerous body of performers, was reduced to a single individual, although its name and functions were still retained. In Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Winter's Tale* the verses connecting act with act are spoken by an actor who is called the Chorus; in *Pericles*, the part is taken by Gower, whose work supplied the story; in *The Mayor of Queenborough*, that archæologically interesting but otherwise dull play, Middleton similarly assigned speeches to his historical authority, the chronicler Higden. Considerable dramatic activity of this novel kind began to display itself about the middle of the sixteenth century. JOHN BALE, a Suffolk man and a violent Reformer, was Bishop of Ossory during Edward VI's reign, and, having been dispossessed of his see at Mary's accession, died as a prebendary of Canterbury in 1563. According to Collier, he wrote twenty-two plays; and, while his main object in composing them was to further the Reformation, he also set the example of extracting materials from the chronicles of his country and employing them in the formation of rude historical plays. His drama of *Kynge Johan* is, however, in the first place, a Morality, and was simply intended to illustrate contemporary politics and religious controversy by an appeal to ancient history; its *dramatis personæ* are largely allegorical, and there is scarcely any thought of exhibiting what we call a historical drama. Needless to say, Shakespeare was not indebted to Bishop Bale for his *King John*, and the old play from which Shakespeare borrowed the idea of his great tragedy has little in common with Bale's work save the title. On the other hand, this Morality of *Kynge Johan* distinctly marks a step in the advance of dramatic art, and it is no long way from this point to the genuine historical drama of later years. Meanwhile, the most remarkable progress in dramatic composition is to be found in a considerable number of pieces, written to be performed by the students of the Inns of Court and the Universities, for the amusement of the sovereign on high festal occasions. It must be remembered that the establishment of regular theatres and the formation of regular theatrical troupes did not take place for a considerable period after these first dramatic attempts. The great entertainments of the rich and powerful corporations at London, Bristol, and other places, prove that the same circumstances which had generated the Chester and Coventry plays and maintained such exhibitions uninterruptedly during a long succession of years, still continued to exist. Contrary to what might have been expected, the first tragedies produced in English were remarkable for the gravity and elevation of their language, the dignity

JOHN BALE (1495–1563).

Interludes at the Universities and Temple.

of their sentiments, and the dryness and morality of their style —"stiff and cumbersome," said Charles Lamb, "like the dresses of its times." These plays are, it is true, crowded with bloody and dolorous events, rebellions, treasons, murders, and regicide; but there is very little attempt to delineate character, and the general gloom is not enlivened by any admixture of comic action and dialogue. The early tragedies maintain a solemn independence of older methods; nevertheless, they too have their moral significance. The best example of their style and spirit is the tragedy of *Gorboduc* or *Ferrex and Porrex*. This play was the work of THOMAS SACKVILLE (1536–1608) and THOMAS NORTON (1532–1584). Norton, who took the smaller share in it, was a lawyer and member of Parliament, and aided Sternhold and Hopkins in their metrical version of the Psalms; Sackville, whom we have already mentioned (see Notes and Illustrations to Chap. IV), was a scholar and is said to have studied at both Universities. At this time (1561) he was member of Parliament for East Grinstead; in 1563 he was one of the principal contributors to the new edition of *The Mirror for Magistrates*; in 1567 he was knighted and raised to the peerage as Lord Buckhurst, and, after a long diplomatic career, was created Earl of Dorset in 1604, and died at a meeting of the Privy Council in 1608, aged seventy-six. *Gorboduc* was produced before Queen Elizabeth in 1561 by the gentlemen of the Inner Temple. The drama was destined to flourish in the Inns of Court, and some of the greatest dramatists of later years were Templars. The subject of *Gorboduc* is borrowed from the half mythological Chronicles of Britain, and the principal event is very similar to the story of Eteocles and Polynices, the tragic legend which has furnished material to the drama in every age. Although the subject of the piece is nominally a British legend, its treatment shows strong marks of classic imitation, and follows the methods of the Hellenic drama through the Latin medium of Seneca, whose stilted and rhetorical tragedies enjoyed a most surprising reputation at the revival of letters. Its dialogue is in blank verse, regular and carefully constructed, but is totally destitute of variety of pause, and consequently is a most insufficient vehicle for dramatic dialogue. The chief pause of the sentence almost invariably occurs at the end of the line, and the effect of the whole is insupportably formal and heavy; for no weight and depth of the moral and political apophthegm with which the work abounds can compensate for the total want of life, sentiment, and passion. Yet, at the most critical moments of the play, the blank verse, if not dramatic, becomes admirably descriptive, and there are few readers who will not admire the stately scene quoted by Charles Lamb in his *Specimens of English Dramatic Poetry*. Blank verse was an entirely new form of poetry, and had been used only twice

"Gorboduc" (1561).

Its style.

before, first by Surrey in his translation of certain books of the *Æneid*, secondly by Nicholas Grimald, who, according to Warton, gave it "new strength, elegance, and modulation." Less strictly Senecan than *Gorboduc* is the tragi-comedy of *Damon and Pithias* (1571), which is in rhyme. Its author was RICHARD EDWARDS (1523?–1566), master of the singing-boys of the Chapel Royal, and compiler of the Miscellany called *The Paradise of Dainty Devices*. He also wrote, for presentation before the Queen at Oxford, *Palamon and Arcite* (1566), a version of the story which had been so beautifully treated by Chaucer and was afterwards to be used in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. Again, in 1578, GEORGE WHETSTONE produced his play of *Promos and Cassandra* in two parts of five acts each. This cumbersome drama, however, achieved no great reputation, and Whetstone appears to have withdrawn it, repeating the story, four years later, in a prose romance, which is simply a translation from the original *novella* by Cinthio. The tale eventually furnished material for Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*.

Early tragedies.

§ 6. All these plays are marked by a general similarity of style and treatment. The first English comedies, on the other hand, offer a striking contrast to them in both these particulars. From the very beginning the national genius, destined to stand without a rival in the peculiar gift of humour, proved that while in tragic poetry it might encounter, not indeed superiors, but rivals, it was to stand alone in the matter of comedy. The earliest comedy in the language was *Ralph Roister Doister*, written by NICHOLAS UDALL (1505–1556), who, from 1534 to 1541, was head master of Eton. This was followed, probably in 1566, by *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, the work of JOHN STILL (1543?–1608), who, after filling the masterships of St. John's and Trinity Colleges at Cambridge, became Bishop of Bath and Wells. This piece, printed in 1575, was probably written for performance in college. It was long considered to be the earliest regular comedy in English, but it was afterwards established that Udall's work, which was probably written before 1541 for Eton scholars, preceded it by several years. Both these plays are highly curious and interesting, not only from their antiquity, but, in some measure, from their intrinsic merit. There can be no question that the first comedy is superior to the second; it is altogether of a higher order, both in conception and execution; at the same time, its method is more traditional and less English. Its action takes place in London, and the principal characters are a rich and pretty widow, her lover, and the friends and servants of herself and her suitor, the foolish personage who gives the play its title. This ridiculous pretender to gaiety and love, a young heir just put in possession of his fortune, is attended by Matthew Merygreeke, a flatterer, who pretends to be his friend, and leads him into all

Comedies: "Ralph Roister Doister" and "Gammer Gurton's Needle."

sorts of absurd and humiliating scrapes. It will be noticed that Merygreeke fills the place of the Vice of the old Moralities. The piece ends with the return of the favoured lover, Gawyn Goodluck, from a voyage which he had undertaken in a momentary pique. The manners represented are those of the middle class of the period, and the picture thus given of London citizen life in the middle of the sixteenth century is curious, animated, and natural. The style is lively, and the dialogue is carried on in a sort of loose, doggerel rhyme, very well adapted to represent comic conversation. In general the intrigue of this drama is deserving of approbation; the plot is well imagined, and the reader's curiosity is well kept alive. *Gammer Gurton's Needle* is of a lower and more farcical order of composition. The scene is laid in the humblest rustic life, and all the *dramatis personæ* belong to the uneducated class. The plot depends on the sudden loss of the needle with which Gammer Gurton has been repairing her man Hodge's leathern breeches, and the whole intrigue consists in the search after the missing article, complicated by the mischief-making of "Diccon the bedlam." The needle is at last painfully discovered by Hodge, who sits down upon it in the garment his wife has been mending. We should remember that in the song, "I love no roste," *Gammer Gurton's Needle* contains one of the finest drinking-songs in English.

Comparison of "Gammer Gurton" with "Maistre Pierre Pathelin."

A comparison of these early comedies, and *Gammer Gurton* in particular, with that curious and interesting piece, *Maistre Pierre Pathelin*, which is regarded as the first specimen of French comedy, would not be uninstructive. In both the transition from the *sottie* or farce to regular comedy is plainly perceptible; and it must be confessed that in the humorous delineation of character, as well as in probability and variety of incident, the French piece has decidedly the advantage. The form of the dialogue, which is in both cases a sort of easy doggerel verse, little removed from the real language of the classes represented, has a great similarity, although the French comedy, so far as its diction is concerned, is far more archaic and difficult to a modern French reader than the English of *Gammer Gurton* is to an English one. Of all the cultivated dialects of Europe, with the single exception of Italian—that is, the literary language—English has undergone the least radical change.

Actors.

§ 7. It will be inferred from what has been said respecting the custom of acting plays at Court, in the mansions of great lords, in the Universities, and in the Inns of Court, that regular public theatres were not yet in existence. Actors were in a certain degree amateurs, and were often the literal domestics of the sovereign and the nobles, wearing their badges and liveries, and protected by their patronage. For a long period the line of demarcation between musicians, singers,

jugglers, tumblers, and actors, was very faint. The Court plays were frequently represented by the children of the royal chapel, and placed, with the dramatic profession in general, under the peculiar supervision of the Office of the Revels, which was also obliged to execute the duties of dramatic censorship. Such bodies of actors, singers, tumblers, etc. were in the habit of wandering about the country and performing wherever they could find an audience, sometimes in the town-halls of provincial municipalities, sometimes in the courtyards of inns. Protected by the letters-patent and the livery of their master against the severe laws which qualified strollers as vagabonds, they generally began their proceedings by begging the countenance and protection of the authorities ; and the accounts of the ancient municipal bodies and the household registers of the great families of former times abound in entries of permissions given to these strolling parties, and of sums granted to them in return for their performances. It is curious to remark that the amount of such sums seems to have been calculated less with reference to the talent displayed in the representation than to the degree of respect which, in the opinion of the giver, was due to the patron or noble protector of the troupe. This state of things, however, had existed long before ; for in the accounts of the ancient monasteries we frequently meet with entries of gratuities given, not only to itinerant preachers or friars, but even to minstrels, jugglers, and other professors of the art of entertainment. Nothing was more easy than to transform the hall of a college, palace, or nobleman's mansion into a theatre convenient enough in that primitive condition of scenic art. At the upper end of the hall the dais or elevated platform was a stage ready-made ; it was necessary only to put up a curtain and a few screens covered with tapestry to produce a stage sufficient for the purpose. When the performance, as was very usual, took place in an inn, the stage was formed by a platform set up in the centre of the yard ; the lower class of spectators stood upon the ground in front of it. The use of this custom still survives in the French term *parterre* : its English equivalent, *pit*, reminds us that many of these early representations took place in cockpits. Indeed, there at one time existed in London a theatre which had originally been employed as a cockpit, and was consequently known as the Cockpit Theatre. Our old inns, of which a few specimens still remain, were built round an open courtyard, along each story of which ran an open gallery or veranda, and on this opened the doors and windows of the rooms occupied by the guests. In order to witness the performance the inmates had merely to come out of their rooms into the gallery. The convenience of this arrangement unquestionably suggested the principal features in the construction of later theatres : the galleries of the old inns were the prototype of the circles of boxes in our modern theatres.

Theatrical devices.

The London theatres.

But the taste for dramatic entertainments grew rapidly more general and ardent, and in the course of time, in many places, and particularly in London, there not only came into existence special societies of professional actors, but special buildings were raised for their exhibitions. The earliest of these were the Theatre and the Curtain, both in Shoreditch, and both built about 1576. At one period London is supposed to have contained at least twelve different theatres, of various degrees of size and convenience. The most celebrated was undoubtedly the Globe—for each playhouse was called after its sign. It was built in 1599, burned to the ground in 1613, and eventually removed in 1644. The chief historical event with which it is connected was the production of *Hamlet* in 1602. Shakespeare's company, which is so closely associated with it, became about 1610 the proprietors of a smaller house on the Middlesex side of the Thames, called the Blackfriars Theatre, built in 1596, and situated very nearly on the spot now occupied by the *Times* offices. The site of the Globe in Southwark is now covered by Barclay and Perkins' brewery. The great majority of London theatres were on the Surrey bank of the Thames, where they could be free from the jurisdiction of the Puritanical corporation, and could carry on their petulant war of wit and caricature with impunity. Hollar's view of London (about 1620) shows us four of these Southwark theatres, extending along the Bankside west of St. Mary Overies church—first the Globe, then the Bear Gardens, then the Hope Theatre, and, a considerable distance westward, not far from the present Blackfriars Bridge, the Swan. Many of these—*e.g.* the Hope—were used alternately as theatres and as places for cock-fighting and bull-baiting, others were simply places of popular amusement turned into theatres; others again, and the Globe in particular, were constructed for the serious business of the drama. All were, however, very poor and squalid as compared with the magnificent theatres of the present day, and retained in their form and arrangement many traces of their ancient model—the inn-yard—of which they had many examples close at hand. As the curious student of Dickens will remember, numerous inns of the old type existed in Southwark till a very recent period. The Red Bull Theatre in Clerkenwell, which was used until the Restoration, was actually an inn-yard turned into a theatre. Externally, these theatres were octagonal or hexagonal. The original shape of the Globe Theatre is doubtful, but the general evidence seems to prove that it was an octagon outside, but internally circular. The building, like the Greek theatre or the Roman amphitheatres, was open to the air, but a thatched roof protected the stage and actors from the weather. It was this thatched roof, in fact, which destroyed the Globe in 1613: during the performance of *Henry VIII* a small cannon or chamber was discharged, and the wadding lodged in the thatch,

causing an immense conflagration. The boxes or, as they were then called, the *rooms*, were arranged nearly as in the present day ; the musicians were not placed, as now, in the orchestra or space between the pit and the stage, but were established in a gallery above what we should call the "dress-circle."

The most remarkable peculiarity of the ancient English theatre was the total absence of painted scenery. A few *traverses*, or screens of cloth or tapestry, gave the actors their opportunity of exit and entrance ; and, in order to give the audience some idea of the place where the action was to be supposed, the primitive expedient was employed of exhibiting a board on which was written the name of Rome, Athens, London, or Florence, as the case might be. So rude a method is remarkable, for the English drama constantly changed its scene. Under the circumstances, however, so continual a change was obviously simplified ; and, in our own day, with its elaborate scenery, the difficulty of changing the scene has been so manifestly felt that the scenic directions of Shakespeare have been simply disregarded by his most loyal admirers. At the same time, the play, in the plain setting, did not degenerate into a mere spectacle, but was accepted on its own merits. Nevertheless, if the scene was thus inadequately represented, some attention was paid to its details. If a bedroom were to be supposed, a bed was pushed forward on the stage ; a table covered with bottles and tankards, and surrounded with benches, easily represented a tavern ; a gilded chair surmounted by a canopy, and called a *state*, gave the idea of a palace, the altar of a church, and the like. At the back of the stage was erected a permanent wooden balcony, about eight or nine feet from the ground, and this served for those innumerable incidents in which one of the *dramatis personæ* was to overhear the others, being himself invisible, and also represented an infinite number of objects, according to the requirements of the piece, such as the wall of a castle or besieged city, or the outside of a house, when a dialogue was to take place between one person at a window and another on the exterior. Thus, in the garden-scene in *Romeo and Juliet*, Juliet spoke from the summit of this balcony, while Romeo stood on the ground outside ; in the same way the "men of Angiers," in *King John*, spoke to the besieging English from the top of their wall ; and, in the storming of Harfleur, the action was divided between Henry V and his troops on the stage and the defenders of the city upon this platform.

Properties of the Elizabethan stage.

In those matters which are to-day technically called *properties*, the old Elizabethan theatres were better provided than could have been expected, as may be seen from the very curious lists of such articles which have accidentally descended to us from the ancient greenrooms. In point of costume very little attention was paid to chronological or national accuracy. The *dramatis personæ* of

all ages and countries were in general habited in the dress of the period, which was fortunately rich, graceful, and picturesque. From the innumerable philippics of divines and moralists against the luxury of the actors we may judge that a considerable degree of splendour in theatrical dress was common. The employment of contemporary costume in plays whose action was supposed to take place in Greece, Rome, or Persia, naturally led to gross anachronisms and absurdities. The assassins of Cæsar were armed with Spanish rapiers; the Carthaginian senators were furnished with watches; but these anachronisms were not likely to strike the mixed and uncritical audience of the time in a very offensive manner. At all events, they are common enough in the art of every age: the medieval sculptor furnished Pharaoh's drowning army with coats of mail, while the Venetian painter humiliated a Venetian Statira and her children at the feet of a Venetian Alexander. And certainly the meagre material aids to scenic illusion then at the artist's disposal were in reality of the greatest service to the poetical and imaginative department of his art. Unable to depend on the scene-painter and the machinist, he was obliged to trust to his own resources, and to describe in words what could not be *oculis subjecta fidelibus*. It is to this we owe those inimitable pictures of natural and artificial objects and scenery with which the dramas of this age are so prodigally adorned. Although most of the characters were clothed in the prevailing fashion, there were certain conventional attributes always associated with particular supernatural personages—angels, devils, ghosts, and so on. "A roobe for to goo invisibell" is one of the items in a list of properties; and, in all probability, the spectral armour of the Ghost in *Hamlet* was to be found in the wardrobe of the old theatres. Apparently such dresses and properties sometimes belonged to persons who derived their livelihood from hiring them to the performers at a fixed price per night; but companies and individual actors, as we know from Henslowe's *Diary*, did not spare money on their equipment.

The curtain, an essential appendage to every theatre, is supposed to have opened perpendicularly in the middle, instead of being wound up and let down, which, owing to the thatched roof over the stage, would have been impossible; and beside this principal curtain there seem to have been other curtains or traverses occasionally drawn so as to divide the stage into several apartments, and withdrawn to exhibit one of the characters as in a tent or closet.

The cost of admission was small, and it was possible to secure the use of a private box or *room* at a low price. It was considered hardly proper for a lady to be present at the representations of the public theatres; and it was certainly long before any of our sovereigns deigned to witness any of these public performances. Whenever the monarch desired to see a play, the actors were summoned to Court; and the

accounts of the Chamberlain's office furnish abundant entries of the recompenses ordered to be distributed among the performers on these occasions. Several companies were under the sovereign's immediate patronage, others were supported by other members of the royal family and the great nobles of the realm; they were bound to "exercise themselves industriously in the art and quality of stage-playing," in order to be always ready to furnish their employer with entertainment; and in return for these services they were protected against interlopers and rivals, and, above all, against the implacable hostility of the Puritanical municipality of London. To this circumstance we may attribute the names of some of our modern theatres, such as Her Majesty's in the Haymarket, or the Duke of York's in St. Martin's Lane: the company of the Royal Opera in Covent Garden retain the title of Her Majesty's Servants; and the custom, which has now died out, of terminating our playbills with the words *Vivat Regina*, was probably a survival of the solemn prayer for the sovereign with which the actors, falling on their knees, closed every piece. This loyal doxology occurs irrelevantly at the end of many old ballads; and to-day the orchestra, at the end of every play or concert, strikes up the National Anthem. Usually the play was represented at a very early hour, in accordance with the habit of dining before midday, and the signal was given by the hoisting of a flag from the summit of the theatre. This remained floating throughout the performance. The Globe Theatre always used a flag embroidered with a George and dragon.

Royal and noble patronage of the drama.

The piece began with three flourishes of a trumpet, and at the third sounding the prologue was declaimed by a solemn personage whose regular costume was a long cloak of black velvet. At the end of the piece, or, perhaps, occasionally between the acts, the clown or jester performed what was called a *jig*, a species of entertainment which seems to have delighted our ancestors. This was a kind of comic ballad or declamation in doggerel verse, either really or professedly an improvisation of the moment, introducing any person or event which was exciting the ridicule of the day, and accompanied by the performer with tabor and pipe and with grotesque and farcical dancing. As the comic actors who took the part of clowns and jesters, then indispensable personages in all pieces, tragic and comic, were allowed to introduce extemporary witticisms at their pleasure, they were probably a clever and inventive class; and the enormous popularity of some of them, like Tarlton, Kempe, or Arnim, seems to prove that their drollery must have been intensely amusing.

Performances.

During the representation of a deep tragedy the whole stage was sometimes hung with black—a singular custom, often alluded to in our older pieces. On ordinary occasions the stage, like every room of the period, was strewn with rushes;

and on these rushes, or on stools brought for the purpose, it was customary for the fine gentlemen to sit amid the full business of the stage, displaying their splendid clothes, smoking the fashionable clay-pipe, exchanging repartees and often coarse abuse with the audience before the curtain, and criticising in a loud voice the actors and the piece. In England, as in Spain, the companies of players have generally been, from time immemorial, private and independent associations. The property and profits of the theatre were divided into a number of shares, as in a joint-stock company; and, as the number of these shareholders was limited, any additional assistance which the society required was obtained by engaging the services of *hired men*, who usually acted the inferior parts. Many bonds stipulating the terms of such engagements are also in existence; and one of the usual conditions was that the actor so engaged should give his services at a fixed price, and should undertake, during the term of his engagement, to perform for no other company. These men had no right to any share in the profits of the society. That these profits were very considerable and constant, and that the career of an actor of eminence was often very lucrative, is abundantly proved, not only by the frequent allusions to the pride, luxury, and sumptuous apparel of the performers which we meet in the sermons, satires, and pamphlets of the day, but still more decisively by the wills left by many of these actors, specifying the large fortunes which they sometimes accumulated in the practice of their art. Examples of this will be found in the cases of Shakespeare and the great tragedian Burbage; and the official name of Dulwich College, God's Gift of Edward Alleyn, recalls the philanthropy and piety of another great actor.

Business arrangements of theatrical companies.

It must never be forgotten by anyone who wishes to form a clear notion of the state of the elder English drama, that female parts were invariably taken by boys or young men. Women did not appear on the stage till about the time of the Restoration, and then, singularly enough, the earliest appearance of an actress is in the character of Desdemona. At first this was considered a shocking and monstrous innovation; but the evident advantage and propriety of the change soon put an end to all opposition. The novelty itself had its first origin in Italy. We must not imagine, however, that, because the parts of women were entrusted to male representatives, they were necessarily ill performed: there are abundant proofs that, of the young actors who devoted themselves to this branch of their art, some attained by practice to a very high degree of perfection. They were often singing-boys of the royal chapel, and, as long as their falsetto voice remained pure, not "cracked i' the ring," as Hamlet says, they were no unfit representatives of the graceful heroines of Shakespeare, Ford,

Female parts.

and Fletcher. Contemporary testimony proves that some of them—for example, the famous Kynaston—seized all the details of their part so admirably that the illusion was complete, and their talent was little inferior to that of Burbage and his great companions. Doubtless, this custom may have in some degree exaggerated that tendency to *double entendre*, with its suggestion of indecency, which, unfortunately, has been the chief failing of the stage throughout its history; but even this objection is to be met by the fact that the habitual appearance of women on the stage not only did not check, but seems to have aggravated the vice and profligacy prevalent at the time of the Restoration both in society and literature. Certainly this absolute want of decency was nowhere more obvious than in the comic drama of the day.

Actor-dramatists.

§ 8. But perhaps the most remarkable of all the dramatic peculiarities of the period was the constant combination, in one and the same person, of the qualities of player and dramatic author. It must not be inferred, of course, that all the actors of this splendid epoch were dramatists; but nearly all the dramatists of any note were actors by profession. This circumstance must clearly have exerted a considerable influence in modifying the dramatic productions composed under such conditions: and this influence, if not exclusively favourable, must have powerfully contributed to give to those productions that strong and individual character, that *goût du terroir*, which renders them so inimitable. It goes without saying that a dramatic writer, however great his genius, cannot, without some practical acquaintance with stage mechanism, give to his work that directness and vivacity which is at the root of popular success. Dramatic effect is the quality absolutely indispensable to the successful playwright: in comparison with it, mere literary excellence is of no avail: and the writer who possesses it is the triumphant rival of the literary playwright, although he may have only a tithe of his genius. The importance of this characteristic may best be judged by a reference to French theatrical literature. All the genius of Corneille and Racine has not been able to preserve their tragedies from comparative neglect, on the stage. As literary compositions they will always be admired and studied (although, perhaps, not very eagerly or exhaustively) by the curious reader: but, as tragedies, it is almost impossible to witness them without a certain sensation of weariness which may be disguised, but cannot be escaped. No doubt, society and manners are somewhat changed since then, but the fact remains that the French classical drama is archaic and obsolete. On the other hand, the comedies of their contemporary, Molière, retain all their freshness and novelty. The reasons for this are not hard to find. Molière, himself a skilful actor, gave to his work the element of scenic effect which the tragic dramatists could never communicate

through their heroic Alexandrines, and he possessed in full measure all the humour which they lacked. It must be remembered that the world has seen no genius equal to Molière in his particular line of art, and that the supremacy of his dramatic work over all contemporary work of the same kind is only natural: but, in every age and every country, the actor-dramatist has an advantage over his literary competitors.

Inequality of their work.

A large majority of our Elizabethan playwrights learned the tricks of their craft by practical experience. As actors, and therefore as authors who wrote hastily to supply the constant need of new plays in that day of short "runs," and to meet the taste of a very miscellaneous public, thinking rather of present success than of future glory, they mingled their work with an alloy of coarseness, violence, and buffoonery, often in the worst taste. On the other hand, the experience which engendered this defect is the motive power which invariably gives to these writings an intense dramatic interest, and an effectiveness not to be compensated for by any purely literary merit. And again, although they were professional actors, this brilliant company of writers, by a chance which has never again been repeated in literary history, consisted of men who were all well educated and, in some cases, really learned. Generally young men of strong passions, and very often of gentle birth, they left the Universities for the stage, hoping to obtain an easy means of subsistence at a time when both writing for the stage and acting were well rewarded by the public. Their new mode of life, with its gaiety and irregularity, possessed great charms for men whose passions were somewhat impatient of the restraint of morality, and this impatience is thoroughly characteristic of the leaders of the new drama. The restlessness of such men as Greene, Nash, and Marlowe is an unmistakable sign of the spirit of the Renaissance: they were men over whose minds the charm of Italy had exerted its influence, with all its good and all its evil. In their hands the drama ceased to be religious, or even to be the vehicle of unorthodox satire: it was consecrated to an art and to a spirit whose extraordinary and self-contradictory qualities are best to be studied in the thoughtless lives and miserable deaths of these men, and, at the same time, in their abnormal sense of artistic beauty. The very disorder of their lives gave them material for general observation, and furnished their work with an astonishing variety of matter. On the other hand these men must in some measure be regarded as early sacrifices to their art: after their own day, the player-actor seems to have ordered his life better and to have profited by their sinister example as well as by their methods; and prudence and industry certainly had their reward in the case of Burbage, Alleyn, and Shakespeare. The literary career of these men was very similar

Influences which produced actor-dramatists.

They attached themselves, in their double capacity as actors and poets, to one of the numerous companies then existing. In many cases they served their apprenticeship by rewriting and rearranging old plays already well known, which, as altered, were of greater use to their company. Having acquired skill and facility in this humble task, they began, if they were ambitious, to bring out plays of their own, which they generally wrote in collaboration with some brother player. This system, which continued in force throughout the period covered by the work of Shakespeare and his immediate successors, placed a considerable check on individuality of style, but, without doubt, had an excellent influence on the Elizabethan and Jacobean drama as a complete and perfect body of work. It was, of course, very much to the interest of a company of actors to possess an exclusive right to the services of an able and popular dramatist; and his productions, while they remained in manuscript, continued to be the monopoly of the company. Thus each troop of actors had the strongest reasons for taking every precaution against the printing of their *répertoire* of pieces, for publication immediately put an end to their rights and allowed rival companies to profit by their labours. In this way very few dramas of this period, in spite of their great merit and unequalled popularity, were committed to the press during the lives, at least, of their authors. In this way, too, is explained the singularly careless execution of such copies as were printed; for the publishers of the day were shameless pirates, and allowed no scruples, such as would arise from the expressed wishes of the author, to interfere with their designs. It must be confessed that theatrical writing, in the England of that time, was looked upon as the lowest branch of literature, if, indeed, it was regarded as literature at all. From what already has been said, it may easily be understood that the profession of an actor, although often exercised with dignity and respectability, was not regarded in a very favourable light by society. The vices and profligacy of many of its members seemed almost to justify the hard terms of the old law which classed players with "rogues and vagabonds." Yet, at the same time, although the works of these dissolute and licentious men show the strongest traces of bad social and moral influences, they cannot be said to be immoral, nor is their tendency at all vicious. The coarseness of their dialogue is superficial, and simply corresponds with the common language of the day.

Career of the actor-dramatist.

§ 9. The playwrights who were the chief predecessors of Shakespeare may be classed as belonging to the school of Marlowe. We shall speak first of the lesser members of the group, concluding with that young playwright who, at the outset of his short and brilliant career, effected a complete revolution in dramatic art, created a new style, and induced a new habit of thought among contemporary

Shakespeare's predecessors.

writers—the morning star, to employ the usual simile, who heralded the sun of Shakespeare. JOHN LYLY, however, stands outside the general company of writers of this period: as a dramatist, he belongs to the order of Court-poets, and has little to do with the romantic movement which Marlowe initiated. Nevertheless, he had his own influence upon its course. He was educated at Magdalen College, Oxford, and devoted his life to the service of the Court, writing for it comedies and pageants, which were performed by the "children" of St. Paul's and the Chapel Royal. He probably enjoyed the favour of Elizabeth, but his petition for the reversion of the office of Master of the Revels was unsuccessful, and, after 1590, when plays in St. Paul's were suppressed, his occupation at Court may have ceased. He died in London in 1606. To-day we find *Alexander and Campaspe*, *Sappho and Phaon*, and *Endymion*, rather dull reading, but we cannot deny the brilliancy of their dialogue; while *Midas* and *Mother Bombie* combine an interest of their own with ingenious skill in this second particular. Indeed, Lyly's meditated interchange of wit had an effect upon prose dialogue in drama not unlike that which, a century later, was produced by Congreve. Lyly's imagination was rich and fantastic, and his style, which had a momentous influence on the Court dialogue of the day, was beyond measure elegant with a peculiar kind of affectation. He represents the English development of a movement in style which, about this time, became very popular in Europe. This movement received considerable impulse from a Spanish book, Antonio Guevara's *El Relox de Principes* (*The Dial of Princes*), and reached its appropriate climax in the distorted phrases of another Spaniard, Luis de Gongora, of Cordova (1561–1627). It consisted in a kind of exaggerated vivacity of imagery and expression: every sentence was crowded with far-fetched allusions and the most remote and unexpected analogies. The term *Euphuism*, which is usually applied to this clever and strained jargon, is derived from Lyly's *Euphues: the Anatomy of Wit*, a kind of novel published in 1579, and succeeded, in 1580, by a sequel called *Euphues and his England*. The books themselves, which are merely a long string of empty and high-sounding discussions on copybook themes, are to modern students almost unreadable. Their importance in the formation of the polite dialogue of common life may be studied in Sir Walter Scott's courtier in *The Monastery*, Sir Piercy Shafton, in the knight Puntarvolo, who is so amusing a figure in Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour*, and in the Don Adriano de Armado of Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost*. Both Shakespeare and Jonson owed a great debt to Lyly, whose extraordinary cultivation furnished a refined standard in the difficult and much abused art of prose dialogue: and, without doubt, the war of words and interchange of quips between

JOHN LYLY (1554?–1606).

"*Euphues*" (1579).

Its influence on English.

Beatrice and Benedick is due to a careful study of Lyly, while, in the character of Malvolio, we see both the virtues and vices of the Euphuistic school adopted and mimicked. A comparison is naturally suggested between Lyly and his friends and the French Euphuists of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, who fell under the lash of Molière in the *Précieuses Ridicules* and the *Critique de l'Ecole des Femmes* : but Lyly was not the mere pedant and hunter after forced epithets which such a parallel might lead us to see in him. He occupies a real place in the history of English style. Moreover, his lyrics are extremely graceful and harmonious, and every lover of poetry knows his "Cupid and my Campaspe" and other little poems which give a lyrical virtue to his comedies.

George Peele (1558?-1597?).

George Peele was, like Lyly, an Oxford man, being a member of Christ Church, and was an actor in one or two prominent companies. His father was a salter in London, and Peele was also employed in composing and preparing some of those shows which were such important parts of the civic festivities. His *Arraignment of Paris*, acted in the Queen's presence before 1584, is the work of a man whose time had been largely occupied in writing masques and pageants. This and an earlier work, *The Tale of Troy*, deal with classical subjects, but in the rest of his plays he struck out a more original path. In *David and Bethsabe*, printed in 1599, he treated scriptural narrative in a style which is often remarkably beautiful, but, applied to a long drama, is hopelessly monotonous, and so abounds in luxurious and sensuous passages that it becomes a weariness. This play, however, although its literary value is great, is not so interesting to the student of dramatic art as two which follow it. The influence of Marlowe may or may not be marked in the immoderate style of *David and Bethsabe* ; but there is no doubt that the subject and treatment of *Edward I* (printed 1593) and *The Battle of Alcazar* (printed 1594) were distinctly suggested by Marlowe. In *The Battle of Alcazar* we have a dramatised version of an historical event which had occurred a very short time before, just as in *The Massacre of Paris* we have an attempt to dramatise the events of St. Bartholomew's Day. On the other hand, in *Edward I*, with all its monotony and declamatory stiffness, we see some promise of work like *Richard II*, *Richard III*, and *Henry V*, plays which, in some degree, were due to Marlowe's *Edward II*.

Robert Greene. (1560?-1592).

Peele is the representative of Oxford among Shakespeare's predecessors. Cambridge, on the other hand, produced a discreditable son in Robert Greene, who was born at Norwich about 1560, and was educated at St. John's College. The story of Greene's life, as set forth by himself in his *Repentance of Robert Greene*, *Greene's Groats-worth of Wit* (both 1592), and other tracts, is a record of

astonishing profligacy interspersed with fits of remorse. He was the first of the dramatists on whom the unstable morality of Italy set its seal; and his pamphlets, written with a certain sincerity, in spite of their evident desire to turn a penny, read like passages in the autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini. Like many witty poets and men of genius of whom our own day has furnished examples, Greene seems to have been unable to steer a middle course between outrageous vice and that no less extravagant profession of religion which appeals to the too finely æsthetic sense. He was by no means exclusively a dramatist. His discourses on polite and amorous subjects were modelled upon Lyly's example in style. From one of his pamphlets, *Pandosto* (1588), Shakespeare borrowed the plot of *Winter's Tale*. *Alphonsus, King of Arragon; Orlando Furioso; James IV, King of Scots;* and *The Famous History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, are his chief plays. But his dramatic work will be found dull and incoherent: its main point is its exhibition of new influences in its structure and style. With Greene and Peele and with the great Marlowe we have at last broken loose from the chains of the Morality and the Interlude; we have abandoned the courtly style of poetry and are upon the free ground of the popular drama.

Side by side with Greene, we may mention THOMAS NASH, the circumstances of whose life were somewhat parallel. Nash, like Greene, was a member of St. John's College, Cambridge, where he graduated in 1585. A man of less talent than Greene, he produced a good many pamphlets of a similar kind, but little dramatic work of importance. He collaborated with other dramatists in a piece called *Summer's Last Will and Testament* (1593), and in a satirical comedy called *The Isle of Dogs* (1597), for which he suffered imprisonment. Greene had similarly collaborated, it is generally supposed, in the piece which was the foundation of the greater part of *King Henry VI.* Nash is famous for the bitter controversy which he maintained with the learned Gabriel Harvey, attacking and caricaturing him with humour and severity. Of this we have already said something (see Notes and Illustrations to Chap. V). The famous *Pierce Penniless, his Supplication to the Devil* (1592), is of greater merit than anything in Nash's remaining dramatic work; and even more remarkable than this is *The Unfortunate Traveller, or The Life of Jack Wilton* (1594), almost the first work in English that can strictly be called a novel. Nash was essentially a satirist. Greene alluded probably to him as "young Juvenal." His private life was as irregular as Greene's, and he lamented his excesses in a tract of self-revelation called *Christ's Tears over Jerusalem* (1593).

THOMAS NASH. (1567–1601).

Another contemporary of Greene's was THOMAS LODGE, of Trinity College, Oxford, to whom belongs a share in Greene's

Looking-Glass for London and England (printed 1594), a play freely founded on a biblical subject, and intended to defend the stage against the Puritanical party. Lodge was by profession a physician, but his literary work covered some ground. Thirteen of his poems appeared in the *English Helicon* of 1600: and his chief prose work, *Rosalynde: Euphues' Golden Legacy*, an Euphuistic pastoral romance, furnished Shakespeare with the plot of *As You Like It.* This was published in 1590, and, four years later, was followed by his chief drama, *The Wounds of Civil War, lively set forth in the true Tragedies of Marius and Scilla.* Collier said of him that he was "second to Kyd in vigour and boldness of conception; but as a drawer of character, so essential a part of dramatic poetry, he unquestionably has the advantage."

THOMAS LODGE (1558?–1625).

This might well be true; for, of all the early playwrights, THOMAS KYD, a pupil of Merchant Taylors' School, is the dreariest. His position in dramatic history is, however, remarkable; and he may be credited with the introduction of a style of play which became popular, and, in its eventual result, was carried to perfection by Webster, Tourneur, and Ford, constituting the most notable phenomenon of its day. His *Spanish Tragedy* is, to modern readers, a piece of little interest, stiff in its outline and style, and too full of blood and madness to be reasonably probable. It is in two parts, both written before 1592. The first was not printed till 1605, when it bore the title of *The First Part of Ieronimo.* The second, printed in 1592, was called *The Spanish Tragedy of one Horatio and Bellimperia.* Its tedious collection of murders seems at once to have taken hold of the public. It was this play which inaugurated the so-called Tragedy of Blood, with its constant movement and crisis, its melodramatic prodigality of villains, innocent victims, and ghastly spectres—in short, the modern melodrama, fallen from its high estate, owes its first inspiration to Kyd, and traces its ancestry from him through such pieces as *Titus Andronicus*, *The Duchess of Malfi*, and *Love's Sacrifice.* He is the father of all those playwrights who strove to—

THOMAS KYD (1557?–1595?) *and the Tragedy of Blood*

"The Spanish Tragedy."

> "Patch up a lamentable tale of things
> Done long ago and ill-done; and when sighs
> Are wearied, piece up what remains behind
> With weeping eyes, and hearts that bleed to death."

Kyd's heart must have bled excessively, considering the number of horrors he crowded into the compass of his play. The importance of the piece depends, not on its literary merit, but on its literary influence. Of course, no work is without its parent, and Kyd derived some general hints from *Gorboduc* and those other tragedies which emulated Seneca: but with

him the stately reticence of these plays counted for nothing: he brought his murderers and madmen on the stage and kept them there, instead of relating their crimes and insanity through the mouth of a third person. His connection with Marlowe is not very obvious: he may have learned something from that school, but he was not of it. It probably will be observed that, of the pre-Shakespearean dramatists, this inventor and innovator was the only prominent writer who was not an University man. And, while the great masters of romantic drama, with the brilliant exception of Shakespeare, were educated at either Oxford or Cambridge, the playwrights who followed Kyd's footsteps in popular tragedy and dealt in wholesale midnight horrors had undergone no preliminary discipline of the kind, but had entered their profession early and consulted the taste of London rather than that of the Universities. There can be no doubt that many of these writers tried their hand upon a *rifacimento* of Kyd's ten-act drama, and that several passages in it, such as the very powerful and fear-compelling scene between Hieronimo and the painter, are the work of improvers whose names, if disclosed, would be well known to us. The scene to which we have just referred to has been ascribed to Ben Jonson, on the strength of the statement of some accounts preserved at Dulwich College. Jonson himself never mentions the play without an obvious expression of contempt. The ignorance of the man who "will swear *Jeronimo* or *Andronicus* are the best plays yet" is, he says in the induction to *Bartholomew Fair*, "a virtuous and staid ignorance." Again, in the induction to *Cynthia's Revels*, he alludes to *The Spanish Tragedy* at some length. "The *umbræ* or ghosts of some three or four plays, departed a dozen years since, have been seen walking on your stage here; take heed, boy, if your house be haunted with such hobgoblins, 'twill fright away all your spectators quickly." Lower down he alludes to the *laudator temporis acti* who has nothing too good to say of *Hieronimo*, as a man "whom it hath pleased nature to furnish with more beard than brain." Jonson is fertile in allusions, and the student may look for another example, couched in the same tone, in his *Alchemist* (Act IV. sc. iv.) At any rate, whatever Jonson, in his early years, may have done with the play, there is nothing in his later work that can warrant our believing this scene, full of the classical requirements of pity and terror, the work of his hand; and, with Lamb, we may safely assign the improvement of this famous and old-fashioned play to Webster or one of the great dealers in this kind of tragedy.

Kyd's influence on popular tragedy.

Jonson's sneers at "Jeronimo."

Thus, then, the Tragedy of Blood came into being. *The Spanish Tragedy* is a play drawn, to speak of its externals, from contemporary society: it shows that desire to reproduce the crimes of Hispaniolised Italy upon the stage which became

the leading note in the plays of Webster and Ford, and was not without its influence upon *Othello*. A similar Italianism of thought infected the life of Greene, whom we have already compared to Benvenuto Cellini, the typical Italian of his age. Such a habit of mind was due, without doubt, to the prosecution of travel in Italy, where each city, during the greater part of the sixteenth century, did its best to emulate the vices of ancient Corinth: but it was fostered even more remarkably by the study of Italian literature and philosophy. In the regular tendency of the day to extol unscrupulous and determined energy (the Italian *virtù*) at the expense of religion and mere virtue; in its love of the form rather than of the power of godliness; in its method of using every virtuous quality as the agent of a policy which was at root insincere, we come face to face with the overmastering authority of Machiavelli, whose dangerous precepts, indispensable to the occasion for which they were intended, were expanded into a rule, not only of politics, but of life and conduct. In the passive, atheistic indifference and fatalism of the time we have an echo of the spirit of Guicciardini. Its licence of speech and grossness of mind, strangely coupled with an intense appreciation of beauty, came from the study of the Italian novelists—not only of the early story-tellers, Boccaccio and Sacchetti, but also of Bandello, who was the crowning example of the discrepancy between morality and religion in one and the same person. And, with all this, we see a real attempt to delineate ideal purity and virtue, the example of which was pre-eminent in Michael Angelo among men, and his friend Vittoria Colonna among women—individuals untouched by the corruptions which surrounded them, and even glorified by the contrast.

Italianism of the early dramatists.

§ 10. In no writer is this conflict of opposites so clearly visible as in CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE, whose astonishing genius was the real creative force of the English romantic drama, and furnished a model, not only to Greene, Peele, and the rest, but to Shakespeare himself. He was born at Canterbury, and was bred at the King's School, beneath the shadow of the cathedral, and at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. On leaving Cambridge he joined a company of players, and his natural inclination for debauchery led him into all kinds of excesses. But, unlike Greene, he did not parade his iniquities for the contempt of posterity. His intellect was far in advance of his years, and of the terrible doubts which must have beset him in the midst of his reckless adventures we gain our only glimpse in the last soliloquy of his *Faustus*—a passage exciting a tremendous awe in the reader, and appealing to his fears rather than his pity. The internal evidence of the extant plays points to the truth of the contemporary belief that Marlowe was an atheist. However, the only authority for this is a document

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE (1564–1593).

His private character.

drawn up by a worthless informer, and consisting chiefly of puerile and not wholly original blasphemies which were probably uttered by Marlowe in his cups. The general tone of *Faustus* hardly leads us to attach much importance to these silly and boastful statements. But that Marlowe was capable, upon the spur of the moment, of everything degrading and foolish is proved by the generally accepted story of his death. He quarrelled with a serving man, one Francis Archer, in a low house of call at Deptford: his own dagger was snatched from him by his antagonist, and he was mortally wounded in the head. He was buried in the churchyard of St. Nicholas at Deptford without a monument or any memorial save the entry in the register. This was on the 1st of June, 1593, in the full summer of his genius. He was not thirty years old.

His death.

All his dramatic work lies between the years 1588 and 1593. At all events, 1588 is the latest date to which we can assign the first part of *Tamburlaine the Great*. It is in concord with the rule of historic coincidence that the year which witnessed the defeat of the Armada and the recognition of England as a first-class political power witnessed also the production of her first great drama. *Tamburlaine* was written in the hitherto almost untried dramatic medium of blank verse—in a stately and resonant metre which, despite its monotony and regularity, thoroughly befitted "so honourable and stately a history." From this time forward the play was emancipated from the formal fetters of rhyme, and Marlowe's weapons were universally adopted. *Tamburlaine* is also the first truly readable play. Its absurdities, natural in the work of a mere youth who, moreover, was riding rough-shod over all ancient prejudices of classical unity and form, were ridiculed over and over again even by his admiring contemporaries. They even blinded the gentle criticism of Lamb, who, however, defined them with some severity, but with no little accuracy, "The lunes of Tamburlaine are perfect 'midsummer madness.' Nebuchadnezzar's are mere modest pretensions compared with the thundering vaunts of this Scythian shepherd." And, again, of the passage familiar to all readers of Shakespeare—

"Tamburlaine the Great" (1588?).

Marlowe's bombast.

> "Holla, ye pampered jades of Asia!
> What! can ye draw but twenty miles a day?"

—he says, "Till I saw this passage with mine own eyes I never believed that it was anything more than a pleasant burlesque of mine Ancient's." But Marlowe's "mighty line" has left more serious results than good-humoured burlesque. It has been truly said that "it has become the life-blood of English literature"; its intense magic is to be found in Shakespeare and Milton, in Shelley and in Tennyson; while, to students of Browning, Faustus' dying soliloquy comes as a

revelation of Marlowe's influence on modern poetry. Where the real fault of *Tamburlaine*, and of all Marlowe's work, lies is in its lack of humour; and it was this, and not mere pomposity of phrase, which struck Shakespeare's sense of the ludicrous. Marlowe's subjects, it is true, did not invite humour; they were essentially serious and dignified; and he was so impressed with their character that he struck out the comic scenes which he had written for *Tamburlaine*. We have missed very little, I expect, by this omission; while we have probably gained from the point of view of purity. Marlowe is never deliberately coarse or indecent; the morality of his plays is undoubtedly, from the ethical standpoint of to-day, imperfect; but his style is not tainted to any great extent by his opinions. Still, from *Tamburlaine*, for example, religion and virtue are singularly absent. The hero performs his prodigies with the most staunch confidence in himself, and with very little trust in Heaven: his queen, Zenocrate, is the incarnation of female spite and vengeance. The conquered Bajazeth is a man of exactly the same personal confidence as Tamburlaine: their strife is simply the strife of one selfish man with another, for no other end than private ambition. Tamburlaine's victory is simply the survival of the fittest. It is true that the second part of the play, which includes Tamburlaine's death, may be taken as pointing the familiar moral, *Sic transit gloria mundi*; but the concluding lines of the poem are an apotheosis rather than a dirge. And Tamburlaine's elegy on Zenocrate is a sincere panegyric of a lady whose single virtue has been a dog-like fidelity to himself. With Tamburlaine her moral qualities do not come into question; it is her beauty which deserves the epithet "divine"; and the quality in Tamburlaine which primarily attracts her is his majestic bearing and strength.

The result of his want of humour.

Marlowe's worship of mere success.

This delight in success, without any too rigid attention to the means by which it is gained, is the leading intellectual characteristic of Marlowe's verse. His ruling passion led him into startling blunders and exaggerations, which he had no humour to correct. But, firmly rooted as his admiration for the theory was, he was an Englishman, and therefore could not see its practice in contemporary life without a certain awe. His attempt to dramatise the Massacre of St. Bartholomew and give the Duke of Guise some of that sinister glory with which he invested Tamburlaine may be passed over as a failure: there is, perhaps, no more feeble dramatic fragment in existence. In *The Jew of Malta* he was more successful. He set himself the task of a study in "Machiavelism": he introduced Machiavelli himself as prologue, and promised the spectators the picture of a man imbued with Machiavelian doctrines and ready to put them into practice. To prepare

His subsequent work.

"The Jew of Malta" (after 1588).

the way for extra wickedness, he made his hero a Jew; and, to make the play more vivid to contemporary eyes, he placed him in Malta, which, in the memory of most living men, had been besieged by the Grand Turk. But, with these materials to work upon, he seems to have been appalled at the task he had undertaken. The play was written, and much of it was written nobly; but its circumstances are childish and ridiculous. It might be classed with the tragedies of blood, for there are murders scattered through it in abundance; but there is nothing awful about them, while there is everything that is silly. Eventually, the piece misses its point. According to the strict rules of the Machiavelian game, the Jew, having got rid of everyone, should prosper, irrespective of any final hope of Abraham's bosom. But, at the very last moment, while he is preparing a crowning atrocity, he is hoist with his own petard, and perishes miserably in his own cauldron of boiling oil. His end, to complicate matters, is devised by the Christian governor of Malta, and is accompanied by the triumph of the Christians over the Turks. So that not only is the disciple of Machiavelli totally confuted, but the honours of the play fall to Christianity, albeit of a low type. That all this is foreign to Marlowe's original purpose, that it is due to a conviction of his own audacity in idealising a base theme, we can hardly doubt.

Beyond this, *The Jew of Malta* has no human interest. The hatred of Jew for Christian is typified for all time in Shylock, not in this monstrous Barabas, who has no more humanity than the equally murderous and Machiavelian Punch. In *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus*, on the other hand, we have a very human masterpiece—scarcely so much a play for acting as a poem for reading and meditation. Its subject, well known to the later Middle Ages, takes us back to the age of the Moralities: in Mephistophilis we see the Devil of the old plays, and in the servant, Wagner, there is a reminiscence of the Vice. But no Elizabethan play is so entirely modern: not even *Hamlet* appeals to us more nearly with its subtle intellectual quality. Goethe, in his infinitely expanded and far more metaphysical treatment of the same subject, fails to touch the chord upon which this wildly romantic poem plays. Marlowe gives us no hint of the birth of Euphorion or of Faust's eventual salvation: he makes no attempt at criticising contemporary intellectual movements: he gives us simply the naked tragedy of a human soul, which, in spite of all warnings, has refused future hope for the sake of present riches and knowledge. The most astonishing thing, perhaps, about the conception of the piece is that it should ever have been acted: to every serious reader it seems too terrible for the stage. It is, however, the one play of Marlowe with which it is impossible to find fault. The plan is vast and harmonious, and the art with which it is carried out

"Faustus."

Its faultlessness and terror.

never falters. The subject excludes humour of itself, and Marlowe has invested it with none of his usual involuntary humour. For *Faustus* is written, as it were, beyond the "bounds of place and time," in a heat of doubt and strange insight. Whether it appealed thus to the playgoers of the time is questionable: but they must have seen something more than ordinary in Mephistophilis' hell, not a literal furnace, but an eternal, involuntary sensation of the "impure passion of remorse": they must have felt an entirely new terror in the isolation of Faustus' death-chamber, with its utter abandonment to irretrievable ruin. There can be no doubt that Marlowe here played for once the part of preacher rather than dramatist, and came forward with a melancholy warning of his own inevitable fate.

Next to *Faustus*, in point of reputation, will live his final tragedy of *Edward II*, which, it is well agreed, furnished Shakespeare with a model for his *Richard II*. From this play, too, the solecisms of *Tamburlaine* and *The Jew of Malta* are absent: it is distinguished by its artistic reticence and economy and its real tragic spirit, conceived as far as possible apart from "King Cambyses' vein." Its treatment is not in harmony with the conventional tale in history. The King's fall does not depend upon a base conspiracy and the fiendish wickedness of the She-Wolf of France. His infatuation for Gaveston and his neglect of the Queen are its cause in the play. The first breeds discontent among his barons: the second tries his wife to the uttermost and eventually leads her to throw herself, as a last resource, upon the protection of Mortimer. Marlowe's Edward is, at the opening of the play, a misguided and rather contemptible creature; but, like Shakespeare's Richard, he improves under adversity, and finally suffers a cruel death in a manner which compels our pity only too readily. No plot could be managed so well: no set of characters balanced so nicely. The opposition of Young Mortimer to the King, the acute contrast between his subtlety and Edward's simplicity, is admirably pointed, so as to excite our compassion for his victim and to give us a just sense of the right position of affairs in this doleful tragedy. We should never forget that *Tamburlaine* and *The Jew of Malta*, although their influence on the stage was tremendous, are yet juvenile efforts. Putting *Faustus* aside as a work peculiar and apart from the rest, *Edward II* may be reckoned as Marlowe's first step to maturity. What he might have done had he lived—what position he would occupy to-day with regard to Shakespeare—are tempting conjectures which will occur to everyone in this connection.

"Edward II" (before 1593).

More than this, his success in the domain of pure poetry is marked by the first two sestiades of *Hero and Leander*. Ordinarily speaking, Marlowe's blank verse is stern, as all verse which depends upon its own majestic cadence must be:

its beauty is classical and statuesque. But Marlowe was a child of the Renaissance, and there were moments when his verse, freed from its somewhat formal yoke, conveyed impressions of a luxuriant beauty characteristic of its own epoch and imitative of no other. The lyrical address of Faustus to the reincarnated Helen is an obvious example of a power which is lost to sight behind the ponderous diction of *Tamburlaine*. The rhymed couplets of *Hero and Leander* have little of that singularly personal passion which is the heart and soul of Faustus' speech; but they are called forth by the same overwhelming sense of external beauty, and their exquisite tranquillity is sustained without a break. In England, without question, Marlowe's unfinished romance is the poem of the sixteenth century. While *The Faëry Queen* appealed to a single class, this poem appealed to the whole nation. Spenser was the representative of a phase in literature; Marlowe was the inaugurator of a movement. Spenser's influence on the language is great; but Marlowe contrived to mould the thought and direct the mind of his generation. *Hero and Leander* was left quite incomplete: two-thirds of the poem, as we possess it, are by the famous George Chapman. But, although Chapman's work is excellent of its kind, it suffers by being grafted on Marlowe's faultless fragment. We do not know the names of all who attempted to take up the tale where Marlowe had left it off: there were many of these, some indifferent, most of them bad poets. But in Shakespeare, Beaumont, and Shirley we have the names of masters in their art who confessed it their model: the *Venus and Adonis* provokes obvious comparison with it, and the *Sonnets* derive from it much of their natural beauty and sweetness. In its own line of poetry it remains without a rival. It translates an old tale of a pagan author into the terms of the Renaissance, adding to the severe plainness of the classical structure a wealth of detail and ornament, a rich sensuousness and outward luxury which is the specific mark of its age. There is more of the Italian feeling about this poem than about anything else of Marlowe's—his other classical adaptation, the rather weary drama called *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, which was written with the aid of Nash, can hardly be cited in the same breath. On the other hand, Italian mannerism and artificiality are entirely absent: it is simply a beautiful, spontaneous song, which marks the final emancipation of English poetry as distinct from drama.

"Hero and Leander" (1598).

Chapman's sequel to the poem.

Influence of "Hero and Leander" on its age.

§ 11. We have spent some time in discussing Marlowe's work; but it has an importance, great in itself, and greater in its sequel, which cannot be overrated, and is too often forgotten in the current idea that the English drama begins and ends with Shakespeare. There is no need to mention the lesser playwrights of the time, whose works, many of them

Minor plays.

excellent, seem fated to rest for ever in the limbo of forgotten plays. The habit of patching up old pieces and working with other dramatists at one piece, makes the distinction of individual merit very difficult. There are, however, two or three pieces which have come down to us, either anonymous, or at least attributed to so many different authors that their parentage is a bone of contention. Some of them are admirable in their way, and others are curious as examples of a practice afterwards general—the dramatic treatment of episodes from our own or foreign history, authentic or legendary, or of remarkable crimes which, from their mixture of romantic and atrocious detail, were the *causes célèbres* of the day. To the first class belong the old *Hamlet* and *King John* (not Bale's play) and the dry tragedy of *Locrine*, which has been ascribed, without any probability, to Shakespeare. These, it is needless to say, have very little literary virtue. In the second class we have the two pseudo-Shakespearean dramas, the crude and powerful *Yorkshire Tragedy*, which can scarcely be his, and the play, scarcely less crude, yet full of admirable poetry, called *Arden of Feversham*, in which one likes to think that he had a hand. With these plays at all events, we stand at the door of his genius.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

A.—EARLY ATTACKS ON THE DRAMA.

It is only natural that the drama, while yet in its infancy, should have met with active opposition. We have referred to the enmity with which the actor-managers had to contend in their relations with the Corporation of London. Less than three years after the elder Burbage had established the first two London theatres in Shoreditch, the Puritan party began their war of pamphlets against the rising art. JOHN NORTHBROOKE, who had been an assistant minister at the church of St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol, and was then living at the neighbouring village of Henbury, published in 1579 a *Treatise against Dicing* and other fashions of the day, including "vain Plays or Interludes." This treatise, like two former works by the same author, appeared under the motto, "Spiritus est Vicarius Christi." Northbrooke's work was succeeded in August of the same year by STEPHEN GOSSON'S (1555–1624) far more famous *School of Abuse*, an intemperate assault on plays and actors generally. Gosson was a Kentish man, who had been at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and, coming early to London, had written some pastorals and one or two plays. He was still a very young man when he suddenly changed his point of view, and became the vehement opponent of his former art. *The School of Abuse*, written in that rough-hewn prose of which all the pamphleteers were masters, raised a controversy, and was almost immediately answered by an anonymous pamphlet, *Strange News out of Afric*. Gosson replied in November with a *Short Apology of the School of Abuse*, appended to an Euphuistic treatise called *The Ephemerides of Phialo*. Both *The School of Abuse* and its *Apology* were dedicated to Sir Philip Sidney, who disclaimed any fellow-feeling with the author

by writing his dignified *Apology for Poetry* and so preventing any further favour of the kind. Gosson found a more bitter adversary in Thomas Lodge, whose *Defence of Stage-Plays* appeared in 1580; and, about the same time, the injured actors, to revenge themselves on their calumniator, brought his own plays on the stage, and acted in their own defence a moral drama called *The Play of Plays*. To this Gosson answered with a third treatise, *Plays Confuted in Fine Actions* (1582), which he dedicated to Walsingham. After this the controversy languished. Lodge once more referred to it in the preface to his *Alarum against Usurers* (1584). Gosson died in 1624, when he had been rector of St. Botolph's, Bishopsgate, for nearly a quarter of a century, and had seen the art which he had tried to blast in its growth rise to its full maturity.

In 1583 PHILIP STUBBES, a staunch Puritan and perhaps the brother of that John Stubbes whose right hand had been cut off at Westminster (1579) as a punishment for his tract against the proposed marriage of Elizabeth with the Duke of Anjou, published his *Anatomy of Abuses*. In this strange dialogue he tilted right and left, from a firmly religious point of view, at the various fashions of the day; and his book is perhaps the most valuable commentary extant on Elizabethan dress and manners. He was by no means incoherent, for he was a man of fair education—he had been at both Universities without taking a degree—and had travelled. The whole tone of his book was, however, illiberal, and the tolerant preface to the first edition was withdrawn in the second. No definite answer to his book was printed; but the anonymous author of the anti-Marprelate tract, *An Almond for a Parrot*, and Nash, in his *Anatomy of Absurdity* (1589), referred scornfully to him; and it was probably on the ground of Nash's animosity that Gabriel Harvey, in *Pierce's Supererogation* (1593), had some good to say of him. Meanwhile, in 1584, GEORGE WHETSTONE, the dramatist and novelist, repented, like Gosson, of his former ways and bewailed the conditions of the actor's life in the pamphlet which is generally known by the title of its second edition, *A Touchstone for the Time*. In 1587 WILLIAM RANKINS came forward with a hot denunciation, *The Mirror of Monsters*, and, in 1588, expressed his contempt of the "Englishman Italianate" in a pamphlet curiously entitled, *The English Ape, the Italian Imitation, the Footsteps of France*. However, by this time the stage was to carry everything before it. As late as 1612 we find Thomas Heywood's *Apology for Actors*, and, in 1615, its *Refutation* by one T. G. But it was not until the drama had run its course that any opposition could put an end to it. Gosson and Stubbes could not check it in its youth; it was reserved for Jeremy Collier to give it the *coup de grâce* in its extreme old age.

B.—THE DRAMA AND THE NOVEL.

Some allusion already has been made to the growth of prose fiction side by side with the drama. It is interesting to notice that the very men who were the pioneers of the drama in England prepared the way for that medium of literary expression which was to succeed the drama as the characteristic national art. Prose romance was, of course, not unknown in England. Malory's *Morte Arthur* had brought together the Arthurian legends and had handed down a rich heritage of fiction to succeeding ages. But there was already a strong desire for realism instead of mere romance in this species of literature—a desire which doubtless was fostered by the study of the Italian novelists. And the real impulse to English fiction came from JOHN LYLY'S *Euphues* (1579), which, although neither a romance nor a realistic novel, had a plot of its own and contained a certain amount of character-drawing. *Euphues*, at any rate, led the pamphleteer-dramatists into the paths of polite fiction. ROBERT GREENE was Lyly's first important follower. Between 1580 and his early death in 1592 he published a number of Euphuistic novelettes in pamphlet

form, many of which—such as *Euphues, his Censure to Philautus* (1587), and *Menaphon: Camilla's Alarm to Slumbering Euphues* (1589)—brought Lyly's *dramatis personæ* once more on the scene. Greene never wandered beyond the limits of Euphuism in his fiction; such titles as *Arbasto, the Anatomy of Fortune* (1584) sufficiently declare his faithful imitation of Lyly; and, if we look for any realism in his prose writings, we find it in his pamphlets rather than in his novels. In *Perimedes the Blacksmith* (1588) he wrote with more freedom, borrowing tales from Boccaccio and the Italian novelists; and in *Pandosto: the Triumph of Time* he eventually supplied Shakespeare with the plot of *Winter's Tale*. But the style is still that of *Euphues*, and the principle of polite and rather tedious dialogue prevails. BARNABE RICH (1540?–1620?) was also early in the field with *Rich, his Farewell to Military Profession* (1581), which contained several tales from Italian novelists, and, among them, one which Shakespeare used in *Twelfth Night*. His second book, *The Adventures of Don Simonides* (1581), which was edited by Thomas Lodge and dedicated to Sir Christopher Hatton, had among its characters Euphues and Philautus; a second part appeared in 1584, and *The Adventures of Brusanus, King of Hungary*, followed in 1592. Meanwhile, in 1582, GEORGE WHETSTONE had imitated Marguerite de Valois' book of novels in his *Heptameron of Civil Discourses*, and, two years later (1584), published a second volume of stories, *A Mirror for Magistrates of Cities*, which ran into three editions with separate titles during the next three years. In 1584, too—a year very prolific in these romances and short tales—THOMAS LODGE published *The Delectable History of Forbonius and Prisceria* in the same volume with his *Alarum against Usurers*. His *Rosalynde*, the most famous of Euphuistic romances, "Euphues' Golden Legacy, found after his death in his cell at Silexedra," and the source of *As You Like It*, appeared in 1590; and, till 1596, he continued to write fiction, producing historical and religious narratives, and a final romance called *A Margarite of America* (1596). But the books which really take their place, after *Euphues*, in the history of English fiction, were SIR PHILIP SIDNEY'S *Arcadia* (1590), and *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594) of that extraordinary and versatile writer, THOMAS NASH—the second dedicated to Shakespeare's friend and patron, Southampton. *Arcadia*, in spite of its artificial style and purely romantic scenery, had within it the germ of the English psychological novel; while Nash's book was the first instance of that overpowering realism which was followed in the eighteenth century by Defoe and has communicated itself to subsequent fiction. By the end of the sixteenth century, however, the drama had established itself thoroughly as the proper means of imaginative art; and, although we still find a novel here and there, it was not until the decay of the stage in the reigns of the later Stewarts that the novel asserted itself. But even then its growth was scarcely spontaneous. For its real beginning we have to look back to Nash, Sidney, and Lyly, and beyond them to the Italian novel, to the vast body of medieval romance, and to all the earliest and vaguest suggestions of the art of story-telling.

CHAPTER VII.

SHAKESPEARE—A.D. 1564–1616.

§ 1. Parentage and education of Shakespeare. § 2. His early life and marriage. § 3. He comes to London, and turns player and actor. § 4. The London theatres. § 5. Shakespeare, the actor. § 6. His dramatic career. Return to Stratford and death. § 7. Evidence to ascertain the chronology of the plays. § 8. The four periods in Shakespeare's career as author. § 9. Classification of the Dramas into History and Fiction. Sources of the Dramas. § 10. His treatment of the Historical Dramas. § 11. His treatment of the Dramas founded on Fiction. § 12. The Poems and *Sonnets*.

Life of SHAKESPEARE.

§ 1. WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE was born on April 22nd or 23rd, 1564, in the small town of Stratford-on-Avon, and was baptised on the 26th of the same month. His father, John Shakespeare, dealt in skins, wool, and all kinds of agricultural commodities, and seems to have added to his occupations the trade of glover, or manufacturer of the numerous leathern articles of apparel which were worn at that time. He himself was of the farmer class, but had married a lady of somewhat higher rank, Mary Arden, whose family had found a place in the courtly and warlike annals of preceding reigns. Her estate lay at Wilmcote, some four miles north-west of Stratford, in that delightful country to which Shakespeare refers again and again in his plays. It is fair, however, to recognise the theory that John Shakespeare came of a good stock, for his grandfather is said to have fought at Bosworth for Henry VII, and to have received a grant of land in return for his services—this, too, not far from Stratford. Mary Arden, at all events, brought her husband in dowry a freehold property of some fifty or sixty acres, with the reversion of an estate still more valuable; and this, no doubt, added distinction and importance to John Shakespeare, already a prosperous tradesman. During many subsequent years he advanced steadily. Stratford, in spite of its insignificant size, has always been a well-to-do place, the centre of a large rural and agricultural district; and the wealth of its tradesmen remains evident in the guildhall and the fine late Gothic guild-chapel, built by the ancient guild of the Holy Cross. John Shakespeare rose to high municipal

His family and its connection with Stratford.

honours. He was chosen in 1565 one of the fourteen Aldermen of Stratford, was promoted in 1568 to the office of High Bailiff, and, three years later, became Chief Alderman. But, about 1577, his prosperity, for some reason or other, declined, and he sunk into a state of comparative indigence. In 1578 it is recorded that he mortgaged his wife's farm at Asbies; his borough-taxes were remitted, and he was excused from contributing a small weekly sum to the relief of the poor. However, his immunities did him little good. His distress increased, and, in 1586, he was deprived of his post as alderman. He was harassed by his creditors, and when, in 1592, he was summoned to account for his absence from church, it was reported that his fault was due to "fear of processe for debtte."

These details are not without importance when regarded as bearing upon William Shakespeare's early life, and especially upon the nature and extent of his education. He could not have received from his parents even the most elementary instruction apart from merely practical matters, for we know that neither could write. Writing, however, was at that time a comparatively rare accomplishment, and was not invariably practised even in the highest society. But there existed in those days, as there exists now, the endowed "free grammar school" of Stratford-on-Avon —one of those schools which, generously founded in most country towns, were the pioneers of English learning and scholarship, and, in some cases, such as Harrow or Rugby, rose to an illustrious immortality. The Stratford grammar-school had been founded in 1482 by one Thomas Jolliffe, and was refounded by Edward VI, after a period of poverty and decay. Probably, in Elizabeth's time, it was a flourishing establishment. It is at all events certain that John Shakespeare, as an alderman and past bailiff of the town, had the right of sending his son to the school without expense; and it is very probable that, in the normal course of things, he took advantage of his privilege. A grammar-school education was very rudimentary; but it was a step towards learning of a more solid kind; and there is certainly a very strong probability that the extensive and miscellaneous reading of which there are so many signs in Shakespeare's plays was fostered in the school at Stratford. Vague traditions, too, were handed down: and Aubrey, who died about 1700, states upon hearsay authority that the poet had been "in his younger years a schoolmaster in the country."

Shakespeare's education.

§ 2. Shakespeare's early life is merely legendary: in the singular absence of trustworthy details, posterity has credulously and greedily accepted a number of stories which have very little foundation. The most celebrated and probable of these traditions is, that in company with other riotous young men, he made a deer-stealing expedition to Sir Thomas Lucy's park at Charlecote, a few miles east of Stratford. He is said to have

His early life and escapades.

been seized, brought before the indignant Sir Thomas, and treated with the severity which he deserved. His lawless spirit, nevertheless, was thoroughly roused by his punishment. In revenge, he fastened a satirical ballad to the gates of Charlecote, which inflamed the magistrate's wrath so much that the delinquent had to avoid further misfortunes by escaping to London. It is evident that, at a much later date, he bore no goodwill to the Lucy family; for, in the creation of Justice Shallow, he clearly aimed his wit at Sir Thomas. The "dozen white luces" (*Merry Wives of Windsor*, I. i.) is an irreverent jest upon the knight's coat of arms: and in the same scene Shallow, proclaiming his grievances against Falstaff, says, "Knight, you have beaten my men, killed my deer, and broke open my lodge." In the second part of *Henry IV*, the satire is even more bitter. Shallow is seen in all the pompous self-consequence of an ill-educated rural justice, is shown us carousing in his orchard, and is among the crowd of Falstaff's friends when Henry V disowns his old companion. The deer-stealing tale is thus credible; but Shakespeare's departure from Stratford and adoption of the theatrical profession can be explained in a different and less improbable manner. He left Stratford about 1586, when he was twenty-two years old. The distressed circumstances of his parents, to say nothing of possible irregularities on his own part, were an excellent reason for sending him away in search of a living. More than this, four years before, he had entered into circumstances which, of themselves, rendered such a step imperative. At the age of eighteen he had married Anne Hathaway, the daughter of a "husbandman" or small farmer, Richard Hathaway, who had resided at the neighbouring hamlet of Shottery, and, at the time of the marriage, was only a few months dead. Anne was seven and a half years older than her boyish husband; but the marriage was formally approved by the relations of the bride, who probably pressed it on, in order to heal a breach in Anne's reputation which was due to the young Shakespeare. The ceremony was performed after a single publication of banns; the privilege was granted by a dispensation from the Bishop of Worcester. The bond necessary for procuring the dispensation is still extant.

His marriage.

This somewhat unequally matched couple had three children—in 1583, Susanna, the poet's favourite child, and, in January, 1585, the twins Judith and Hamnet. Hamnet, Shakespeare's only son, died in 1596: the two daughters survived their father. No evidence exists as to the happiness of the union or the reverse. During some twenty years, the most active portion of his life, spent in London, it is supposed that his wife remained with her children at his parents' house in Stratford. Tradition records that he visited his native place every year. No maintenance is made for his wife in his will:

His children.

Subsequent relations with his wife.

she was, however, legally provided for, being entitled to dower on her husband's freehold property. Yet he seems to have done his best to prevent her from receiving any benefit from this source. The interlineation in the will by which he conveyed to her his "second best bed with the furniture," conveys no positive meaning, and was not necessarily an intentional insult.

Concerning the boyhood and youth of Shakespeare, then, we know little or nothing. We are justified in concluding that his education was neglected, his passions strong, and his conduct irregular; for tradition, a most unsafe guide in detail, is, in its general tendency, fairly accurate. However this may be, we cannot but rejoice at the destiny which allowed him to draw his earliest impressions of nature from the calm and graceful scenery of Warwickshire, and placed him, for his discipline in human nature and passion, in the limited area and amid the typical characters of a small provincial town. Perhaps, too, the very imperfection of his intellectual training aided his genius in suffering his gigantic powers to develop of themselves, unhindered by the bonds of regular education. There is a theory that, at one period of his youth, he was placed in a country lawyer's office; for throughout his work he shows a special knowledge of technical legal language, and frequently draws his illustrations from its vocabulary. Shakespeare also employs his terms with an almost invariable correctness, which may argue the professional man. Add to this a possible satirical allusion by Thomas Nash (1589), which, if it refers to Shakespeare—who was then at the very outset of his career—points to his early training in the "trade of Noverint," as the profession of a lawyer's clerk was called, owing to the words "noverint universi," placed at the beginning of writs.

Obscurity of this period in Shakespeare's life.

§ 3. Shakespeare, therefore, at the age of twenty-two, leaving behind him a wife and three children, poverty-stricken parents, and a reputation not altogether clear, left Stratford altogether and embarked upon a theatrical life in London. Legends accompany his progress: the story of his menial position at the doors of theatres, holding horses for their owners, is a myth which crept into being somewhere in the eighteenth century and deserves no serious consideration. The companies of actors were always glad to enlist among their number men of ready genius who could write as well as act plays. The Elizabethan dramatist fell into the habit of writing plays because he was an actor and had to supply his company with pieces to act in. It was an odd method for the display—accidental, it might almost seem—of so much genius; but this was exactly the way in which Molière's comedies were produced. Marlowe and Ben Jonson were actors, and the proofs of Shakespeare's aptitude for the stage are evident. Warwickshire, moreover,

Shakespeare's departure for London: he becomes an actor.

was a county of actors. Theatrical companies had visited Stratford, and had performed before the Mayor and Corporation. Coventry was a town which, for the antiquity of its stage history, was second to none. There is every reason for supposing that the young adventurer received an invitation to throw in his lot with the Lord Chamberlain's company, which is known to have visited Stratford in 1587, soon after his departure. Like other young men of the time, he made himself useful in the double capacity of actor and arranger of pieces, and we have no reason to suppose that his professional career was in any respect different from that of his contemporaries, save in the industry and success with which he pursued his double calling, and the prudence which enabled him to accumulate his earnings. His earliest task, we may surmise, was the adaptation of old plays to the exigencies of his theatre: and, while engaged in this apprenticeship to his profession, he acquired that consummate knowledge of stage effect which so distinguished him. His connection with the theatre continued from a little later than 1586 to about 1611, a period of twenty-five years, embracing the splendour of his youth and the vigour of his manhood. Between the probable dates of 1589 and 1611 he had produced his thirty-seven dramas, beside others in which he had a considerable share: and these, and all his poems, with the only possible exception of *Venus and Adonis*, his earliest venture, belong to this astonishing period of intellectual brilliance.

Other Warwickshire actors.

Shakespeare as actor-dramatist.

§ 4. The theatrical company in which, during the greater part of his London career, Shakespeare was an actor and shareholder, was the richest and most prosperous of the metropolitan companies. Originally their plays were represented in Shoreditch parish, at a house which, in 1576, had been established by James Burbage and bore the exclusive title of "The Theatre." In the reign of Elizabeth the playhouses were commonly placed either in Shoreditch, which lay outside the City walls, or in Southwark, which lay on the Surrey side of the river. This removed them from the jurisdiction of the Common Council of London, which, looking upon theatrical gatherings as dangerous to morality and religion and as singularly unhealthy in time of plague, used all its efforts to discountenance and crush the players. We can hardly wonder that the Puritanical aldermen saw very little to admire in the gross obscenities in which the witty vagabonds of the theatre too often indulged their pens; but the actors took every opportunity of wounding their enemies with bitter jokes and pasquinades. Middleton, for instance, who wrote almost as late as to the time of the Civil Wars, made an eternal butt of Puritanism and the "pure following" of Amsterdam. Naturally, the aldermen

State of the theatre in London.

Puritanical opposition to the stage.

retorted with persecution, and, in the eventual triumph of their principles, the theatres were closed and play-acting made an indictable offence. However, partly by its prudence in avoiding political allusions, partly by securing powerful protection at Court—Elizabeth was an admirable critic of the drama—Shakespeare's company considerably increased in importance. In 1592 it left its old theatre in Shoreditch for Henslowe's new playhouse in Southwark, the Rose. In 1599 the Burbages removed the materials of the Theatre play-house from Shoreditch, and used them in the construction of the Globe Theatre. This famous house was built, like the Rose, upon the Bankside, in Southwark, and received its name from its sign, an effigy of Hercules supporting the globe, with the motto *Totus Mundus agit Histrionem.* It was built of wood, was circular within, and, with the exception of the part occupied by the stage, was roofless. It was used chiefly, but not exclusively, as a summer theatre. The Blackfriars Theatre, which, in 1596, James Burbage had founded within the City precincts, was roofed over, and therefore was more suitable for winter performances; but it was not taken over by Shakespeare's company till many years later, and was occupied meanwhile by that troop of boy-actors, the Queen's Children of the Chapel, to whose part in dramatic history Shakespeare makes satirical reference in *Hamlet.*

The Blackfriars and Globe playhouses.

§ 5. Guided by the feeble light of tradition and by occasional obscure allusions in the writings of the day, we may trace Shakespeare's professional and literary career from the time of his joining the company at the Theatre or the Curtain, until his retirement from active life about 1611. He seems to have been highly successful. During some eighteen years, at least, he rendered himself useful to his theatre as an actor. He is spoken of (1592) by Chettle, a contemporary dramatist, as "excellent in the quality he professes"—the word *quality* having at that time a special reference to the occupation of player. He is named among the "principal tragedians," and placed first among the "principal comedians" who enacted two of Jonson's plays. Many passages in his writings prove that he had a profound acquaintance with the theory of acting—Hamlet's directions to the players (III. ii.) are enough to carry conviction. Nevertheless, he does not seem to have taken the foremost part in any drama. We have good reason for supposing that he acted the awe-inspiring, but not very difficult, part of the Ghost in his own *Hamlet*; the secondary, but graceful and touching character of Adam in *As You Like It*; and the sensible citizen, Old Knowell, in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour.* His services as an author were become more valuable to his troupe than his powers as an actor. Burbage, we know, was the original "creator"—to use the slang

Shakespeare's success on the stage.

Parts taken by Shakespeare.

term—of his comrade's great tragic parts, Richard III, Hamlet, Othello, and the like. After all, the great playwrights were not the great actors of the day: the great actors were so exclusively masters of their art that they were incapable of writing plays.

§ 6. Shakespeare's first original poem was not dramatic. *Venus and Adonis*, which, in the dedication to Lord Southampton, he confesses to be "the first heir of his invention," was not published until 1593. This poem, full of an exquisite and voluptuous imagery which places it beside Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, in style somewhat studious and quite in harmony with the Italianised fashion of the age, may have been conceived at Stratford. Its composition there is at least doubtful. *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594), a somewhat similar, but a more mature and colder work, written in the seven-lined stanza of Chaucer's *Troilus*, enjoyed a great but inferior popularity. *Venus and Adonis* was reissued in seven separate editions between 1593 and 1602; while *Lucrece*, during nearly the same lapse of time, appeared in only three. We cannot be certain of the time at which Shakespeare exchanged his work of adaptation for writing plays on his own account. Contemporary allusions begin to be authentic in 1592—and then the poet was already, as actor and playwright, become important enough to call down upon him the attacks of envious or disappointed wit. In that year a pamphlet, entitled *Greene's Groats-worth of Wit*, was published after the death of its author, the brilliant and profligate playwright, by his executor, Henry Chettle. Greene, addressing certain of his fellow-dramatists from his death-bed, and warning them against the fickleness of the favour shown to playwrights, proceeds thus: "Yes, trust them not: for there is an upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his *Tygers heart wrapt in a players hide*, supposes he is as well able to bumbast out a blanke verse as the best of you: and being an absolute *Johannes factotum* is, in his owne conceit, the only Shake-scene in a countrie." We may infer from this distinct reference to Shakespeare that he had made himself in many ways of service to his company, and had rehandled and converted to his own purposes certain plays which had been written, at least in part, by the rancorous Greene. These were probably the second and third parts of *Henry VI*, for, in the third part (I. iv.) occurs the line, "O tiger's heart wrapped in a woman's hide!" which Greene had so ingeniously and spitefully turned into parody. However, Chettle made amends for Greene's dying amenities in his *Kind-Heart's Dream*, a pamphlet published almost immediately after the *Groats-worth of Wit*. He apologised in this *brochure*, using terms which bear testimony, not only to Shakespeare's genius as a writer, but to his excellence as a man, to his "uprightness of dealing," his "civil demeanour,"

Shakespeare's early poems.

Jealousy of rival dramatists.

to the "facetious grace in writing that aprooves his art," and to the fact that he had already gained the friendship and patronage of distinguished persons. Almost all contemporary notices agree in attributing to Shakespeare an amiable, gentle, and generous disposition.

It is quite certain that the generous Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, and it is asserted, with perhaps less foundation, that the accomplished William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, were patrons and admirers of Shakespeare. D'Avenant, indeed, relates that Southampton made the dramatist a present of £1000—a sum equal at the present day to six times its nominal amount—"to go through with a purchase which he heard he had a mind to." This princely gift, if actually bestowed, may have been not so much a personal gratuity to Shakespeare, as a generous contribution to the support of Shakespeare's company as representative of the drama. The action, none the less, would show the high respect which the poet had inspired. Shakespeare's good sense, prudence, and knowledge of the world in his business relations with the theatre and the public are proved by the skill with which the actors of his troop managed to steer clear of dangers. They avoided not only the risk involved in the Puritanic opposition of the London Corporation, but the still more serious perils which they might have incurred by offending, in political or satirical allusions, the susceptibility of the Court and the censorship. The severity of the censorship made almost all the other companies of players suffer, some in the forcible closing of their theatres, some in the imprisonment of authors and actors alike. Thus Middleton was brought before the Privy Council on account of his *Game at Chess* (1624), in which he had exulted at the defeat of the negotiations for the Spanish Match and had grievously offended the powerful ambassador Gondomar. Middleton himself was probably imprisoned: the actors were fined and forbidden to play for a certain period. With his success on the stage Shakespeare's worldly prosperity seems to have gone on continually increasing. He seems to have carefully invested his profits, for, in May, 1597, at the age of thirty-three, he purchased the property of New Place, which included the most considerable house in Stratford-on-Avon. This was to be his place of retirement, so soon as the state of his fortune would permit. No doubt, during his life in London—certainly in 1596, and after—he made frequent visits to his native place, and maintained a lively interest in his townsmen and their public and private affairs. In 1598, at all events, they applied to him, probably as an influential person in the capital, to interest his powerful friends on behalf of Stratford, whose exemption they were demanding from taxes and subsidies. He was able to

Shakespeare's patrons.

Immunity of his plays from censure.

Growth of his fortune.

His constant connection with Stratford.

afford a tranquil asylum to his parents and to reinstate them in a dignified position ; for in 1597 Dethick, Garter King-at-Arms, granted an application for arms which had been made the year before by John Shakespeare. In 1601 the poet's father died ; his mother survived until 1608. In 1596 had occurred his great misfortune—the death of his son Hamnet, who was only in his twelfth year ; otherwise the external circumstances of his life seem to show a continued prosperity. In 1602 he purchased 107 acres of land, and most probably engaged in farming operations with the help of his brother Gilbert. Two years after this we find him as plaintiff in an action before the Court of Stratford, to recover £1 15*s.* 10*d.*, being the price of malt sold and delivered to one Philip Rogers ; and, in July, 1605, he purchased a lease of the tithes of Stratford, to expire in 1636. The marriage of his favourite daughter Susanna, to Dr. Hall, took place in 1607 ; and in the following year she brought into the world a granddaughter to the dramatist, who may have visited Stratford both at the wedding and at the christening. Just about that time he certainly stood godfather to William Walker, the child of one of his friends and fellow-townsmen. About 1611 he finally retired to New Place, where he lived with his daughter, Mrs. Hall, and her husband, a doctor with a considerable reputation in the provinces. Three years later we learn that Shakespeare and his son-in-law were in London together to withstand the proposed enclosure of common lands at Stratford. He did not long enjoy, however, the retirement for which he had so earnestly laboured. He died on April 23, 1616, the day on which, if he was really born on St. George's Day, he completed his fifty-second year. In the February before his death his second daughter, Judith, was married to Thomas Quiney, a vintner in Stratford : her eldest son, whom she named Shakespeare, died in infancy, and both her younger sons died within a month of each other in 1639. With respect to Shakespeare's last illness and decease we have no trustworthy information. Dr. Hall, indeed, has left us a curious record of some of the most remarkable cases occurring in his practice ; but, unluckily, his notes, as we have them, do not begin until 1617, the year after the poet's death. Writing in 1662, John Ward, vicar of Stratford says, "Shakspere, Drayton, and Ben Jonson had a merry meeting, and itt seems drank too hard, for Shakspere died of a feavour there contracted." On this tradition, made out with an "it seems," not much reliance can be placed. The poet was buried in the parish church of Stratford, the registers of which furnish the greater part of the meagre but trustworthy information we possess concerning the family vicissitudes of the Shakespeares. There is a mural monument over his grave, chiefly remarkable as containing a bust of the poet—an authentic, although not very well executed portrait. It was probably copied from

Final retirement to his native place.

His death.

a mask of the face taken after death—a death-mask bearing some resemblance to that of the alleged portrait, was discovered at Mayence in 1849. Malone, in 1793, caused it to be whitewashed; but the original colours were restored in 1861, the eyes being a light hazel, and the beard and hair auburn. Of the other likenesses of Shakespeare, the coarse engraving by Martin Droeshout, prefixed to the First Folio edition of his works (1623), and probably copied from a painting which was discovered in 1892 and is now in the Memorial Gallery at Stratford, appears to be the most faithful and accurate. Its authenticity as a faithful resemblance is vouched for in the noble eulogistic verses which Ben Jonson placed before it. We may trust this evidence, for Ben Jonson, the friend and admirer of his great contemporary, was not the man to say what he did not think, or to be led astray by mere fancy.

Authorities for Shakespeare's personal appearance.

Shakespeare's birthplace and tomb will for ever remain sacred spots, shrines of loving pilgrimage for all the nations of the earth. The house of New Place has long been destroyed, but the garden in which it stood is preserved. A kind of cult has grown up round the house in which he was born: it is now used as a museum, and contains a valuable collection of books and other objects connected with him. Everyone knows at any rate the pictures of the charming buildings traditionally connected with Shakespeare's life—his house, Anne Hathaway's cottage at Shottery, and the like. The Shakespeare Theatre, with its anniversaries and sequence of dramas, is certainly a most worthy tribute to the memory of the great actor and playwright, and, although it has very little of that intimate connection with his name which Bayreuth, for instance, has with Wagner's, remains a very important factor in the stage history of his plays. Not long before his death Shakespeare made his will, from which we obtain a very exact account of the nature and extent of his property at the time of his decease. In the mode of its disposal we see evident traces of that affectionate and generous disposition to which most of his contemporaries testify: for example, he leaves some token of regard, generally a ring, to his old comrades and fellows. This document is equally precious to us from the triple repetition of his signature. His handwriting is very rare indeed, although now and then specimens turn up which have some evidence in their favour. One doubtfully authentic signature occurs in the British Museum copy of Florio's *Montaigne*, that admirable and idiomatic translation which we know that he studied diligently.

Memorials of Shakespeare at Stratford.

§ 7. The most valuable principle of classification which can be applied to Shakespeare's writings is obviously founded on the chronological order of their production. Such a method gives us, as it were, a complete chart of the intellectual and artistic development of Shakespeare's

Chronology of the plays.

mind. Absolute certainty with regard to original dates is indeed unattainable, but we can make out a general scheme of the order of Shakespeare's writings which is trustworthy in its main outlines. The evidence for the chronology is of various kinds, and where all the recognised tests concur, we may find certainty. Before the publication of the plays in the collected form of 1623, known as the First Folio, nearly half of their number had appeared singly in quarto shape. The dates of these quartos are known, and dated entries, moreover, of their intended publication appear in the register of the Stationers' Company. Thus, under the date January 18, 1601, we find the entry, "An excellent and pleasaunt conceited comedie of Sir John Faulstoff and the Merry Wives of Windsore." Again, in contemporary books or manuscripts we come upon express statements respecting Shakespeare's plays. Of these the most remarkable and important is a passage in the *Palladis Tamia, or Wit's Treasury* of Francis Meres, published in September, 1598. The writer enumerates six comedies and six tragedies of Shakespeare, and makes mention of *Venus and Adonis*, *Lucrece* and his "sugred Sonnets among his private friends." He frankly recognises "mellifluous and hony-tongued" Shakespeare as the greatest writer of his day. The Muses, he declares, "would speak Shakespeare's fine filed phrase, if they would speak English." Sometimes, again, a quotation from some play, an imitation of some passage, an unmistakable allusion to some scene or incident, without any express mention of the play itself, may serve equally well to ascertain its date. When Weever, in his *Mirror of Martyrs*, printed in 1601, wrote the lines—

Evidence from contemporary allusions,

> "The many-headed multitude were drawn
> By Brutus' speech that Cæsar was ambitious;
> When eloquent Mark Antony had shown
> His virtue, who but Brutus then was vicious?"

—there can be very little doubt that the writer had seen a performance of Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar*. Or, on the other hand, Shakespeare himself imitates or quotes from some contemporary volume, of which the date of publication happens to be known. *The Tempest*, for example, contains a passage manifestly borrowed from Florio's translation of Montaigne's *Essays*—the speech (II. i.) in which Gonzalo describes his imaginary commonwealth. Florio's book was published in 1603. Therefore, unless these lines are a later insertion, or unless Shakespeare had seen Florio's manuscript, *The Tempest* cannot have been written before that year. Finally, no one who has any acquaintance with contemporary political and literary history, will fail to find constant allusions to contemporary events and books in Shakespeare. For instance, in *The Comedy of Errors* we find a punning allusion to the French civil wars, which must have been going on at the time. Therefore, seeing that these

and from allusions in the plays themselves.

struggles ended with the papal absolution of Henry IV in 1593, we have at once a date after which the play could not have been written. Similarly, it is thought that, in the conversation of the night-watch in *Much Ado about Nothing*, when they catch Borachio's and Conrade's words imperfectly, their amusing misunderstanding of the word "deformed" is a "topical" allusion to *The Deformed*, a play by Ben Jonson. Such an allusion could have been made only while the play was still fresh in people's mouths. Obviously, this method of criticism, although it encourages far-fetched interpretations, is most valuable in limiting dates. However, its value is far greater in the case of the lesser dramatists; for, of all writers of his gossiping day, Shakespeare is the least garrulous, the least disposed to linger over passing topics.

Further, this evidence is wholly external. It merely brackets a play within dates: it does not fix its definite historical position. From the premises just mentioned we may prove that *The Tempest* and *The Comedy of Errors* were written before or after certain dates; but, as to their relation to *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, or *Cymbeline*, or *Measure for Measure*, this proves nothing. We may stumble upon some evidence of the kind in these plays —but then, on the other hand, we may not. Happily, Shakespeare's works contain a great amount of internal or textual evidence, which is not merely left to the precarious decision of the cultivated and fastidious mind, but may be reduced to the terms of an exact science. Certain changes took place in Shakespeare's manner of writing verse from his earliest to his latest plays; and these can be so accurately observed that it is possible to express the degrees of change by precise statistics. Long ago Malone remarked that, in his youthful plays, Shakespeare made use of rhymed verses in large numbers, and that his abandonment of rhyme was gradual. Since then Malone's observation has been substantially confirmed by an exact calculation of the percentages of rhymed and unrhymed lines in all the plays of Shakespeare. It is found that, whereas in *Love's Labour's Lost*, known to be one of the earliest written dramas, the number of rhymed lines exceeds the number of unrhymed by nearly two to one, in *Hamlet*, a play of the middle period, the proportion is so changed that for one rhymed line there are thirty unrhymed; while in *Winter's Tale*, certainly one of the latest plays, not one single line is rhymed in more than eighteen hundred verses. It was also noticed that, in his early manner, Shakespeare would frequently close the sense and the line together, thus allowing constant pauses in the flow of his poetry; but, as he obtained mastery over his verse, his treatment of it became more free, and the position of the pauses constantly varied, no longer occurring with regularity at the close

Imperfect nature of this evidence

Textual evidence of chronology.

Gradual abandonment of rhyme.

of the verse. Thus, comparing *Love's Labour's Lost* with *Winter's Tale* a second time, it is estimated that, in the earlier play, the proportion of lines which run their sense from one into the other, and so on, is no more than one in eighteen; while in *Winter's Tale* it is one in two. Again, at a certain period in his authorship, Shakespeare extended his freedom further. Not only did he permit the sense to run on from line to line at pleasure, but began in some instances to terminate a line with what is called a weak monosyllabic ending, the effect of which is necessarily to carry the mind and voice onward without the least hindrance into the line following. Examples of such "weak" or unemphatic endings are the words *and*, *if*, *on*, *to*. All these are of comparatively late appearance in Shakespeare's dramatic career, but quickly begin to occur frequently—to such an extent, indeed, that the "weak ending" forms the most characteristic feature of the versification of the great final group of plays. Once more, as Shakespeare made progress in his craft, and as his workmanship became bolder and more flexible, he took pleasure in deviating from the regular ten-syllable form of verse, by terminating the line with a double (or feminine) ending, thus including at least eleven syllables in the line instead of ten. Of such eleven-syllable lines in *Love's Labour's Lost* there are four per cent., and no less than thirty-one per cent in *Winter's Tale*.

"Weak endings."

To these statistics, not infallible, but affording ground for a good working hypothesis, we may add the results, which, if they cannot be tabulated, may assuredly be trusted, of finer and more critical enquiry. We observe the dramatist's increased power in dealing with the structure of the plot, and in representing the deeper passions of humanity. His experience of life, his acquaintance with his fellow-creatures, is larger; his thought is stronger and more energetic; his imagination extends its sphere of action; he shows, in short, a capacity for more varied and more profound characterisation. He unmistakably alters the nature of his imagery, the manner of his expression. In his early plays his imagery is, comparatively speaking, the reverse of complex and involved; it is studiously handled and drawn out in detail. In his later style, metaphor presses upon and crosses metaphor; each paragraph teems with multitudinous and varied life, which is nevertheless always at unity with itself; the expression is close-packed, and there is a "daring confidence in the resources of language, which plunges headlong into a sentence without knowing how it is to come forth." In a word, the art of the apprentice is become the art of the master.

Evidence from observation of structure, etc.

§ 8. Relying upon such various evidence—external and internal—we are enabled to distinguish four chief periods in the dramatic art of Shakespeare. The first, the tentative period, the years of experiment, include, first, the plays by earlier authors which were retouched by the hand of Shakespeare. Chief of these are

Titus Andronicus, a gruesome and not very interesting tragedy modelled on some old play akin, from the side of style, to Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*; and the first part of *Henry VI*, which, in its turn, can hardly be reckoned among Elizabethan masterpieces. Secondly, there are the light and graceful comedies of this period—*Love's Labour's Lost*, a play of dialogue and witty discourse, yet full of exquisitely melodious verse; *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, a romantic comedy of love and intrigue; *The Comedy of Errors*, which, in the main, is sheer farce; and *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, which is primarily a masque, and a play only by virtue of its form and length. To the same period belong the earlier historical plays, the conception and first building-up of the great tragic monument of the House of Lancaster. We must regard this as Shakespeare's most magnificent idea, worthy to stand beside Æschylus' tragedy of the line of Pelops, or Sophocles' sublime tale of Œdipus and the House of Laïus. If no historical play is individually equal to *Hamlet*, *Lear*, or *The Tempest*, the scheme in which each royal drama forms an integral part is far more daring and gigantic than the scheme of any separate and isolated play like *Hamlet*. The early plays of this series, the second and third parts of *Henry VI*, are thought to have been written in collaboration with Greene and Marlowe. The character of Richard III, however, which is developed somewhat rudely, but with astonishing power, through both these plays, belongs to Shakespeare and to no one else. Its further elaboration is seen in *The Life and Death of King Richard the Third*, a splendid historical drama, vivid in scene and rapid in movement, which, however, in its occasional bombast and evident delight in theatrical *tours de force* recalls Marlowe rather too forcibly. Marlowe's *Edward II* undoubtedly suggested a great deal of Shakespeare's *Richard II*, a tearful and poetical play, whose central figure must always stand as one of its author's truest and most delicate creations. Rhyme and blank-verse struggle for the mastery in this play, which also contains not even the shadow of a humorous scene. Apart from the main subject of the historical dramas is the play of *King John*, founded upon some older piece, but elevated and ennobled by Shakespeare. We can forgive the shameless violation of history which distinguishes this play, in face of the noble scene between Hubert and Arthur, the lofty patriotism and unflagging high spirits of Faulconbridge, and the dark figure of the king, pursued by relentless fate to his ignominious end. And to this period, too, belongs the tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet*, disfigured by certain youthful crudities which careful revision was powerless to remove, yet remaining unique and incomparable among the dramatic works of all nations—the lyrical tragedy of youth and passion and hopeless fate.

Periods in Shakespeare's writing: I. Experimental period.

Series of historical plays.

In the second period of his authorship Shakespeare filled up the gap in his vast historical tragedy with the two parts of *Henry IV* and *The Life of King Henry V*. This final play, impeded in its movement as it is by an excess of rhetoric, is nevertheless a most noble celebration of heroic valour and patriotism; while its hero is the apotheosis of valiant royalty. But, although these plays are, without doubt, the true masterpieces of this period, it is equally a period of light, joyous, and mature comedy. At its end we find a cluster of brilliant comedies—*Much Ado About Nothing*, *As You Like It*, and *Twelfth-Night*—which are all more substantial and more refined than any comedy of the first period; for even *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, the most refined of the early plays, is by no means substantial. These plays are still the most popular of the comedies on the modern English stage; and playgoers are as familiar with them all as with *The Merchant of Venice*, which, written probably a few years before them, may be regarded as the typical comedy of Shakespeare's best period. Up to this time he occupies himself less with the dissection of human character than with the construction of his plot; and yet Portia, Beatrice, Rosalind, and Viola, are among his most wonderful and memorable creations. Shylock, too, is of this company, and, above all, Falstaff. In connection with the fat knight, history and comedy are so mingled and united that the two parts of *Henry IV* almost leave their places in the Lancastrian cycle to become the comedy of Falstaff, who is further presented to us—an unworthy caricature of his former self—in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Side by side with the history of the Percy revolt and the king's sickness, side by side with the contrasted figures of Hotspur and Prince Hal, goes the story of Falstaff, that magnificently humorous, utterly graceless masterpiece of human nature. Henry V's renunciation of his company is certainly for us, as it was (if we may judge from the epilogue) for the audience, the proper climax of the second part of *Henry IV*. Clearly, however, Falstaff's proper part in these plays is that of foil to the prince, who is the real hero of them; and his vices, like Hotspur's virtues, are simply part and parcel of young Henry's environment—part of the background against which his portrait is painted in such splendid and life-like relief. The prominence given to Falstaff simply results from pleasure in this original creation and from the satisfaction that it is altogether good. Similarly, in *Henry V*, after Falstaff has given up his last breath, we pursue the fortunes of his henchmen, and thus lose nothing of the sequence of comic scenes. *Henry V* is quite inseparably connected with *Henry IV*, and the three plays, taken together, form a complete and indivisible trilogy, dealing with the fortunes and glorifying the virtues of the most chivalrous of all kings. The classification of the historical plays may

II. Period of maturing genius.

The great Comedies.

Falstaff.

be attempted in several ways, provided that their general unity be always kept in mind—for, although not written in regular order, we can everywhere trace that distinct idea which, always present to Shakespeare's mind, links the whole chain together in its proper order. Shakespeare's treatment of history had a considerable influence upon the development of his artistic powers, and, by emphasising the opposition of serious historical fact to the light conceits of fantastic comedy, led to his third period. From this time forward his intellect seems to rise until it overshadows his whole life: his work shows less mere technicality and more genius, until his genius takes complete hold of his art and does with it what it likes.

III. The period of Tragedy.

For, directly succeeding the age of *Twelfth-Night* and *Much Ado About Nothing*, comes a period whose poetry is of sterner stuff. There may have been external causes which darkened the poet's life, and inspired, as a great misfortune well might, the grandeur and terror of his art. Much more probably, the cause was purely intellectual. He had completed his Lancastrian tragedy, and saw in it his masterpiece; and, in unrolling it, episode by episode, he had read deeply in the book of fate, which is the source of all tragedy. Moreover, in his earliest period, he had essayed tragedy in *Romeo and Juliet*, which, although a tentative experiment of a kind quite different from *Hamlet* or *Lear*, is nevertheless the reverse of a failure. And, if we are resolved on attributing this radical change of manner and thought to personal circumstances, we may readily suppose that, as years passed by, Shakespeare was more deeply affected by the loss of his only son, that little boy whose early promise and death, reviewed over a long gulf of time, doubtless suggested the pathos of young Mamillius' death in *Winter's Tale*. At all events, he bade comedy farewell with *Measure for Measure*, the strangest and darkest of non-tragic plays, whose *dénouement*, meting out the strict dues of virtue and vice and mating sinner with sinner, has little of the kindliness of comedy and all the wild justice of revenge. From about 1600 to 1610, a period of ten years, tragedy follows tragedy in steady and majestic succession. We become the spectators of a living pageant, in which there pass before us the ills of life, calamity, jealousy, treachery, ambition, the breach of natural ties, the false love of woman, filial ingratitude, self-destructive pride, the misanthropy of wounded kindness and too credulous affection. All these are personified for us in an atmosphere of tragic gloom which, from *Julius Cæsar* to *Timon of Athens*, grows more enduring and more intense. But, beside the terrible shapes of tragedy, moved by the invisible hand of fate, we feel the alleviating presence of other and less dreadful forms. The same play which contains Lady Macbeth contains also Banquo, and Goneril has Cordelia for her sister. Hamlet's native generosity compensates, dramatically speaking, for the horror of his

The great Tragedies.

mother's crime : the purity of Desdemona, enhancing the pity of the tale, is the white contrast to Iago's villainy. Yet these are involved in the general tragedy. From the self-destruction of Hamlet to the tragedy of an empire in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Shakespeare's tragic figures walk in darkness among ruins and chaos.

IV. The final period—"Cymbeline," "Winter's Tale," and "The Tempest."

But the gloom, which reaches its darkest in that melancholy and cynical play, *Timon of Athens*, passes away. A serene and tender light, the long after-glow of a summer sunset, begins to pervade Shakespeare's poetry. It is the calm after the storm, the rose-garden after the rain. In the final plays of Shakespeare, the serious romantic dramas, there is still the memory of fate, the sense of tragedy. There is mirth in these plays, but it is never noisy and boisterous ; it is always tempered by grave and quiet undertones. *Cymbeline*, *Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*, with its wealth of profound, imaginative thought and intellectual suggestion, belong not so much to a fourth and separate period of their own as to the grand tragic period, of which they are the logical outcome, redeeming such mistakes as *Timon*, and crowning the head of Shakespeare's work with an immortal garland. Their manner and meditated style seem to point to their leisurely composition in intervals of thought and enjoyment ; and yet they lose no intensity and passion. They are calm and faultless—and that is all : in their marble perfection we see the true, unsullied greatness of their author. During this period, too, Shakespeare wrote much that was finished by other hands. There are plays attributed to him which excellent but uneven dramatists like Rowley might have written in moments of sad intellectual aberration. He may have had a hand in that strong play, *Arden of Feversham*, which was suggested by a contemporary tragedy in real life—a murder at Faversham in Kent—but the kindred play, *The Yorkshire Tragedy*, does not belong to him. There seems little doubt that he was concerned with Fletcher in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, but that he had anything to do with *Locrine* or *Sir John Oldcastle* is the reverse of probable. But certainly the main idea and much of the text of *Pericles*, *Prince of Tyre*, the one play not included in the First Folio, is due to him ; and Marina, the heroine, is of the family of Portia and Desdemona, Hermione and Imogen, pure, womanly—in a word, Shakespearean. Lastly, Shakespeare composed a large part of *Henry VIII*, giving life to Cardinal Wolsey and Katharine of Aragon, and thus imparting to the play its singularly fine and rare quality : but the work was certainly aided and completed by John Fletcher, whose part in it gives it a rather incoherent structure. This descent to the common method of literary partnership, a path almost new to Shakesqeare, may show that he was now withdrawn from the serious

Possible evidence of collaboration in other plays.

business of play-writing and was enjoying the peace and happiness of a country home.

§ 9. This mode of classification by periods is undoubtedly the most interesting, but requires a somewhat lengthy explanation. For mere purposes of textual arrangement, the mode adopted by the First Folio, and in most of the subsequent editions, is the best—*i.e.* the division into Tragedies, Comedies, and Histories. However, it is obvious that all these forms of art have their subdivisions, and that the subdivisions are apt to overlap one another in a manner most disconcerting to this useful and general method. Thus the "pastoral-comical"—to use Polonius' serio-comic classification—may go hand in hand with the "historical-pastoral" or the "tragical-historical," and thus cause lamentable confusion. This mingling of styles is one of the peculiar and distinctive traits of the Elizabethan drama, and is certainly one of the chief among its titles to excellence. Yet, although a certain difficulty is caused by complexities like this, the generally adopted arrangement of Shakespeare's plays, beginning with *The Tempest* and ending with *Pericles*, takes no notice of these critical cases of conscience, but, following traditional rules, places *Cymbeline* among the tragedies, and the analogous *Winter's Tale* in the number of the comedies.

Classification of the plays into Tragedies, Comedies, and Histories.

There remains a third mode of classification, not without some interest and significance. We may found our enquiries upon the topics which attracted or excited the poet's imagination and passions, the sources from which he drew the material for his dramatic creations. These naturally divide themselves into the two great classes of History and Fiction, *Wahrheit* and *Dichtung*; and of these the first subdivides itself into different classes or degrees of historical authenticity, ranging from vague and half-poetical legend to the comparatively firm ground of recent historical events. Again, the legendary plays fall under the headings of the different countries from whose chronicles the stories were borrowed. Thus the story of *Hamlet* is related by the Danish chronicler, Saxo Grammaticus, who, it seems, borrowed its main features from an Icelandic saga still extant; *Macbeth*, *Lear*, and *Cymbeline* are reminiscences of the more or less fabulous annals of Scottish and British history; *Titus Andronicus* and *Timon of Athens* are free versions of Roman and Greek stories and legends. Of the dramas which belong in the main to authentic history, there are two groups. There are the Roman plays, *Coriolanus*, *Julius Cæsar*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*. Then there are the English plays, of whose classification we have already spoken. It is, however, somewhat necessary to insist on the fact that this great series deals, not with the House of York, but with the House of Lancaster, to whose eventual fall Richard Plantagenet and his

Classification by the origin of the plays—History and Fiction.

Historical pieces.

sons are merely active accessories. Just as *Richard II* shows us the crime for which the descendants of Bolingbroke atone, so *Richard III*, the one play devoted to the Yorkist party, shows us how the agent of this vengeance must himself inevitably pay the penalty of the avenger. And, even in this piece, the memory of the Red Rose is for ever present, first in the presence of Henry VI's corpse, afterwards in the prophetical and ill-omened appearances of Margaret of Anjou, who disappears just before Richard's adverse fate comes into action. To call these plays grand panoramas of national glory and distress is to admit only a fraction of the truth: their matchless bond of tragic unity places them among the greatest and most convincing of human tragedies. In thus skilfully adapting history to tragic purposes, Shakespeare borrowed largely from the annalist Holinshed. Perhaps his power of selecting incidents and wresting history to the ends of tragedy is most clearly shown in the isolated play of *King John*. *Henry VIII*, the other disconnected historical piece, belongs to the history of a period which to Shakespeare was comparatively recent: the free partnership of Fletcher renders it unsatisfactory, and damages a noble play—an historic tragi-comedy.

Pieces derived from fiction.

For the second general category, including pieces derived from fiction, Shakespeare found his materials to hand. The great mine of the fabulist, from Chaucer down to La Fontaine, was the *Decamerone* of Boccaccio, that inexhaustible miscellany of stories, which was translated and copied into all the tongues of Europe. Beside Boccaccio, the most brilliant of the band, there was a crowd of lesser Italian story-tellers, whose *Novelle* or merry anecdotes were well known in England. Such were Franco Sacchetti, Ser Giovanni of Florence, Giraldo Cinthio, the Neapolitan Masuccio, and the famous Matteo Bandello, Bishop of Agen, who almost supplanted Boccaccio in the sixteenth century. Their books were imitated in most nations: in France their counterpart is found in the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*, collected at the command of Louis XI, and the *Heptameron* of Marguerite de Valois, sister of Francis I: in England the most important collection of such tales was Painter's *Palace of Pleasure* (1566–7), which would certainly have formed part of Shakespeare's library. Shakespeare never invented a plot for himself: in one case (*All's Well that Ends Well*) he deliberately borrowed a story told by Boccaccio and translated by Painter, merely interpolating the comic episode of Parolles. This is a single unfavourable instance. We may see what he really did invent by a simple comparison of the bald novel or poem that is the ground-work of his piece, with the full human tide of life and interest in such a play as *Romeo and Juliet*. He worked, in fact, so skilfully on his original that the dead model receives life and freshness at once, the model which already has life of its own becomes immortal through the medium of its great

copy. There is a significant contrast between this fidelity to old and familiar subjects and the restless straining after new situations and varied intrigue which marks the younger dramatists of Shakespeare's age. No less than nineteen plays of Shakespeare are derived from fiction. It is, of course, unnecessary to suppose that Shakespeare in every case resorted to the original Italian sources. There were noble translations to his hand; and the greatest critics of his work seem to be agreed that, in the subjects of his plays and in the quotations which occur in his dialogue, he rarely made use of any ancient or foreign materials not existing in these translations. There are, however, certain exceptions which suggest that he knew Italian: there is an Italian book in existence which contains his supposed signature; and, even without this slender piece of evidence, we may safely say that *Much Ado About Nothing* and *The Merchant of Venice* were not written by a man who knew nothing about the language or the country. His wonderful extent of reading proves that he was no more an illiterate man than Montaigne. Montaigne, however, was a classical scholar; while Shakespeare, for his *Julius Cæsar* and *Coriolanus*, was quite content with Sir Thomas North's version of Plutarch. Ben Jonson, in his noble tribute to the genius of his departed friend, describes him as having "small Latin and less Greek." These were in no sense the words of an envious carper, or of a malicious perverter of truth; but it may be remarked that Ben Jonson, one of the most learned, and certainly the most academical writer of his day, might have characterised as "small" a degree of scholarship which, to any ordinary man, would be considerable.

Shakespeare's knowledge of Italian.

§ 10. If the reader looks at the table of the original sources and classification of the plays which he will find at the end of the present chapter, he will see that many of the historical dramas were founded upon preceding dramatic works treating of the same, or nearly the same subjects. In some cases we possess the more ancient pieces themselves, exhibiting various degrees of imperfection and barbarism. We are thus in a position to compare the changes introduced by the consummate art of Shakespeare into the rude draughts of his theatrical predecessors, and to appreciate his wise economy in retaining what suited his purpose, as well as his evident skill in modifying and altering what did not. In three or four examples we have more than one edition of the same play in its different stages towards Shakespearean perfection—the best example is *Hamlet*. By a careful and minute collation of these different editions we obtain precious materials for the investigation of one of the most interesting and most useful problems which literary criticism can approach—the complete apprehension of the different phases through which every great work must be elaborated. We have already said something of the general

Gradual formation of each historical play.

scheme upon which the so-called Histories are constructed, of their intellectual bearing and their spiritual affinities. But, going further into detail, and looking at the whole of the historical and legendary category of the dramas, at *Julius Cæsar*, and *Lear*, and *Macbeth*, as well as at the great tragic series of English historical plays, we are astonished from the very first at the force and completeness with which the poet seized the features and local peculiarities of the age and country selected for reproduction. Considering the anachronisms in this kind which bristle on all hands throughout the drama of this period, Shakespeare's comparative freedom from this ordinary fault is all the more extraordinary. Where he slips, it is only the more fastidious reader who will detect him. In his process of creation, his transformation of stage puppets into human beings, he was careful to add what we call local colour and clothe his figures in the vesture of their day. This method is eminently synthetic : it implies an orderly progress of collected thought : his Romans in *Julius Cæsar* and *Coriolanus* are true Romans because they are, in the first instance, real men. Just in the same way the great portraits of Velasquez, the artist who, with respect to modern painting, fills the position of Shakespeare in regard to modern poetry, show us first the real, human, living and breathing man as the artist saw him : it is only by an afterthought that we acknowledge him to be the true Spaniard, noticing his dress and the fashion of his ruff and beard. Ben Jonson, with his usual parade of learning, displays in *Sejanus* and *Catiline* a knowledge of the details of Roman manners, ceremonies, and institutions as accurate and extensive as that familiarity which Dr. Becker's *Gallus* displays with the same subject, and infinitely wider and more correct than the acquaintance which Shakespeare had scraped with it here and there. But the figures of Ben Jonson's Roman dramas are admirably constructed dummies, hung with expensive trappings, and fitted up with a system which substitutes the glow of rhetoric for the circulation of the blood : in a word, they are not for a moment to be compared with the intense human reality everywhere present in Shakespeare's *dramatis personæ*. The nature of the historical play, as it was understood by Shakespeare, admitted and even required the adoption of an extensive epoch as the subject, and a numerous crowd of agents as the material of the piece : and every careful reader may detect for himself, unless he is positively blind, the separate and distinct individuality which every figure on the stage possesses, each with his own human characteristics and national idiosyncrasies. A crowded stage, like that of *Richard III*, is not unlike Velasquez' magnificent dramatic picture of the Surrender of Breda, in the Museum at Madrid. The foreground is thronged with figures—Spaniards, Walloons, Germans, mixed together and jostling each other—but every one

Shakespeare's insight into the spirit of a country or age.

of them is clear and distinct, each figure in the medley is a real portrait, embodying the nature and the ingrained national and provincial peculiarities of the subject. It almost follows without remark that Shakespeare, in his adherence to local colour, allows, in his choice of earlier periods, for the changes worked by time; otherwise, there is no reason why he should not at once have identified every age and every figure with the age of Elizabeth and the typical Londoner of the day. The spirit of the mob in *Julius Cæsar* is as changeable and fickle as the spirit which animates the citizens in *Coriolanus*; but in *Julius Cæsar* the mob itself, the external body, is no longer the same; its mode of expressing itself is altered by the progress of three centuries. Similarly, it is as easy to differentiate Richard III and his surroundings from John and his, as it is to distinguish between the French and English nobles in *Henry V.* Yet, obvious as this power may be—this full appreciation of every epoch from all its sides—it implies a degree of genius little short of superhuman. Wherever anachronisms occur—and, again, we cannot but expect them—they never affect the essential truth of the delineation. A hero of the Trojan war may quote Aristotle; the Romans of Pharsalia may fight with the short Spanish rapier of the sixteenth century; and the whole English public, from the King in *Richard III* down to the Host in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, may know all about Machiavelli and his theories long before he is born, or while he is still in his "'teens": but the language and sentiment of classical times is never adulterated and tarnished with conceits of gallant and courtly compliment, such as the poets used in the days of Louis XIV. We cannot imagine any of his wonderful women—Constance, or the Lady Anne, or Richard II's queen—speaking with the neat phrase, the studied fluency, and oratorical passion of Racine's Phèdre. Shakespeare, again, in mingling scenes of private and domestic life with the stirring and heroic episodes of war and policy, shows us, out of the depths of his human knowledge, the man as well as the hero. However, the courtship of Henry V, which, in that ideal portrait of portraits, should be the standing example of this rule, is its exception. But in the performance of so delicate a task as the bringing together of Richard II and his queen in their last meeting, or the self-revelation of Henry IV to his son—a task evaded by lesser writers—we have a fresh proof of the supremacy of Shakespeare's genius. Even more convincing than this is the most skilful and appropriate union of comic scenes with the lofty solemnity of his historical pageants, both Roman and English. We have spoken above of Falstaff's place in *Henry IV*, where the heroic and familiar stand shoulder to shoulder: he is once more a foil to the central figure of Prince Henry. But there is yet one more lesson to be learned from this juxta-

Truth of Shakespeare's characters to nature.

Juxtaposition of the serious and comic.

position. Never, during the whole play, do we feel any discord in the constant transit from the weightiest matters of State to the light humours of a London tavern. Here, and here only, we completely experience the perpetual contrast between the laughable and the serious which is at the root of the comedy of life and is the secret of all humour: and it is the reflection of this antithesis which, caught perfectly, and with a nearly divine accuracy, sets the two parts of *Henry IV* so high among their companions. It is manifest that from these to certain other historical plays is a rapid descent. The three parts of *Henry VI*, early and composite plays, are wooden in style and construction, and, with the exception of the Cade scenes, are devoid of humour: their redeeming quality lies in their preservation of the tragic unity of their series. One can hardly think that parts of these plays did not undergo a considerable revision and retouching, a few years later, when Richard III was being, or had just been written. In their diversity, and yet in their somewhat arid harmony of styles, Shakespeare's part is not obviously to be discerned. It may be that Marlowe had a hand in them, for certain passages are obviously reminiscent of his ponderous, sonorous manner. However, the same might be said of *Richard III*, whose style is the highest and most splendid monument that could have been raised in memory of Shakespeare's great harbinger. Those fine passages in *Henry VI*—the Cardinal's death, for instance—may have been written by Shakespeare under the spell of Marlowe's genius, quite as well as by Marlowe himself. The peculiarity of Fletcher's versification gives us some clue to his written part in *Henry VIII*, and, by following this, the whole piece has been carved up and assigned, like a cake divided between two good children, part to one author and part to the other. We can, at any rate, trace Fletcher's hand guiding the stage-management of the whole piece; but the characters of Wolsey and Katharine belong to Shakespeare and to no one else. The greatness and authenticity of Shakespeare's genius cannot be tested by an arbitrary standard, by the exact science of words, and syllables, and metre; its ultimate judgment is the verdict of taste, of acute spiritual perception aided by the invaluable quality of common-sense.

§ 11. Hitherto we have been dealing simply with the historical and legendary plays. These, however, give us only a partial conception of Shakespeare's dramatic genius. And while this class of plays reveals the freedom and vigour of his intellect in treating historical facts and persons so boldly and with so sharp a reference to their dramatic capacities, his romantic dramas, founded upon fiction, and consequently free from any trammels of veracity, prove equally that this unrestrained liberty did not interfere with his strict fidelity to nature. The *dramatis personæ* of this class show the same consummate appreciation of the

Romantic Dramas.

general and of the individual in humanity; and, although he steps from time to time across the boundary of human nature, and introduces a multitude of supernatural beings, witches, fairies, spirits, and other creatures of the imagination, even in these his severe consistency and strict verisimilitude do not abandon him. They are, in their own order, infallibly perfect; we realise that such beings exist merely for dramatic purposes, but we know that, did they really exist, they would appear and act precisely as Shakespeare has made them. Their action, proceeding from given points and recognised data, is consistent even in the most remote and trivial details, and defies the gainsaying of analysis. It must be remembered, however, so far as witches go, that the power of witchcraft was still a common belief in the days of Shakespeare, and that his imagination was not wholly left to itself, but was stimulated by contemporary tradition. Again, in his mode of delineating passion and feeling, Shakespeare towers above all other dramatists.

Shakespeare's creation and knowledge of human character.

Some writers create a personage by accumulating to its making all such traits as, by reading and observation, are found to accompany the fundamental element in its constitution. Obviously, the personage thus created becomes the mere embodiment of some moral peculiarity, the hero of a monograph of ambition, avarice, or hypocrisy. He is, as it were, the creature of a single phrase, like a minor character in Dickens. Moreover, in the expression of their feelings, tragic or comic, such characters almost universally describe the sensations they experience. Men and women in real life never do this: when under the influence of any strong emotion, we leave our sufferings to be inferred by others, indicating more by what we suppress than by what we utter. In this subtle point, which is not always apprehended by the greatest modern writers, the men and women of Shakespeare's stage are pre-eminently human, and separate themselves from the generality of dramatic work. And closely allied with this is his firm grasp of the complexity of human character. If we analyse any prominent character in Shakespeare we may at first sight recognise the predominance of one single quality or passion; but, on a nearer view, we find that, with every new attempt on our part to comprehend the whole extent of its individuality, the complexity of its moral being goes on widening and deepening. Macaulay observes that it is easy to say, for example, that the primary characteristic of Shylock is revengefulness; but a closer insight shows a thousand other qualities in him, whose mutual play and varying intensity go to compose the complex being drawn by Shakespeare in the terrible Jew. Nothing is more childish than the superficial judgment which identifies the great creations of Shakespeare with some prominent moral or intellectual characteristic. His conceptions are as multiform as those of nature herself. This wonderful power of conceiving complex character is at the bottom of

another distinctive peculiarity of our great poet, namely, the total absence in his works of any tendency to self-reproduction. To deduce from his dramas any notion of his personal sympathies and tendencies is a task of the utmost hazard and difficulty. He is marvellously impersonal; or, rather, he is all persons in one. It is probable that, if any man other than Shakespeare could conceive Othello's jealousy, he might subsequently attempt a second time what he had done so admirably already. But Shakespeare never again recurs to Othello: that passionate, warm-hearted, credulous paragon of jealous husbands dies on the stage of his own passion, and is never revived to help out another play. There are other jealous husbands in Shakespeare—Leontes, Ford, and Posthumus—but their jealousies are all different from each other: the men in whom they burn are in no way the same. And even more clearly in Shakespeare's women do we see this inexhaustible variety. Much has been said and written about this incomparable band of ladies, beautiful, sincere, robust, plain-spoken, and drawn with an infinite delicacy and fondness of touch. The depth and extent of Shakespeare's creative power is nowhere more visible than in his women; for, in conceiving these exquisitely varied types of female character, he knew that they would be entrusted in representation to boys or young men. No woman acted on the stage till long after the age which witnessed Hermione, Lady Macbeth, Rosalind, and Juliet. While creating marvels of womanly delicacy, grandeur, and passion, he was conscious that they must be personated on the stage by a male actor, and that he himself must feel what he so powerfully expressed in the words of his Cleopatra :—

> "The quick comedians
> Extemporally will stage us: Antony
> Shall be brought drunken forth, and I shall see
> Some squeaking Cleopatra *boy* my greatness."

Surely the power of ideal creation has never undergone a greater trial, or emerged from the ordeal so triumphantly.

Emotion in Shakespeare.

In the expression of strong emotion, as well as in the delineation of character, Shakespeare is superior to all other dramatists and to all other poets. Violent and declamatory rhetoric is as far below his immeasurable genius in the one case as is any combination of abnormal or unusual qualities in the other. His genius is his faithfulness to nature and the laws of human experience: he shows us the emotions and passions of the world around us, not of any distant and imaginary planet where the divine purpose is worked out in melodrama, with the aid of sentimental assassins, monstrous villains, and prodigies of distorted virtue. He draws his illustrations, where he is at his best, from the most ordinary scenes of life. It seems the veriest platitude to point out that, in his intense simplicity, his pro-

found wisdom, he proves himself equal to every great occasion. There are, indeed, in his works many passages in which he has allowed his taste for intellectual subtleties to get the better of his judgment, and others in which the enthusiasm raised by the situation or the emotions of the speaker is suddenly chilled by his own strange and incurable delight in punning. This villainous habit was, however, the literary vice of the day. Bacon was not altogether free from it; while the humorous and ingenuous Dekker, an even greater offender than Shakespeare in this respect, seems to follow up every one of his feeble and intricate puns with a happy chuckle of pleasure. But this indulgence in conceits generally disappears in the great culminating moments of intense passion; in the later plays it is far less frequent; and, even if it be reckoned as a grave defect, we must not forget that there are occasions when the most highly-wrought moral agitation is not incompatible with a morbid and feverish activity of the intellect, and that the most violent emotion may sometimes find a vent in the intellectual contortions of a conceit. The grand difficulty of Shakespeare's style arises from his enormously developed intellectual and imaginative faculty, which leads him to weave into its ordinary tissue metaphor of the boldest kind. Thoughts rose so fast beneath his pen, and generated others in their turn with so great a rapidity, that the reader must borrow what mite he can from the poet's supernatural vivacity of thought, in order to trace the leading idea through the labyrinth of subordinate illustration. In all figurative writing the metaphor, the image, is an ornament, something extraneous to the thought which it is intended to illustrate; it may be detached from it, and still leave the fundamental idea intact. With Shakespeare, on the other hand, metaphor is the very fabric of the thought itself, and is entirely inseparable from it. Our superficial glance loses itself in these mazes, as we are dismayed, on first entering some great Gothic church, at the immense multiplicity of detail; but a closer examination shows us that every pillar, every ornament, and every moulding is an essential member of the main structure, indivisible from its body, and necessary to its perfection. There is no poet, ancient or modern, whose writings contain such a number of practical and, at the same time, profound observations. Line after line of Shakespeare has passed into a proverb—observations expressed with a casual simplicity, but pregnant with all the wisdom of philosophy. Their perfect textures, clothing so plainly and so sufficiently their inexhaustible meaning, is the secret of their immortality. We may seek for parallel examples in the choice maxims of La Rochefoucauld and in the practical philosophy of Molière's comedies: but even to the most fertile thoughts of authors who were never, in the least degree, superficial, we find a limit; a definite line is drawn where we cease to learn anything fresh from the

Shakespeare's use of metaphor.

passage; its universal application becomes narrow and constricted. Further, just as, in studying Shakespeare's treatment of supernatural beings, we have conviction forced upon us by its consistency and imaginative veracity, so, in all abnormal situations arising from an intimate connection with these or with equally fantastic human figures, we find the same steadfast coherency in the midst of events which, at first sight, seem altogether to transcend ordinary experience. Every grade of folly, for instance, from the verge of idiotcy to the most fantastic eccentricity; every shade of moral perturbation, from the jealous fury of Othello to the pitiful frenzy of Lear or the supremely sorrowful madness of Ophelia, is represented in his plays with a sublime and unanimous realism which never falters in its plighted troth to life and nature, and is never false to its high and splendid aim. Compare these deluded victims of madness with the ungraceful, repulsive, and unreal presences of the lunatics who masquerade in Ford's tragedies and, with a little more success, in Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*, or the idiots who mop and mow under Dekker's hand, to distract the Duke's attention while his daughter marries Hippolito. These are madmen borrowed from books. Shakespeare, for his early studies of this sublime perversion of passion, and for the subsequent praise and pity of the whole world, went straight to the book of life.

His treatment of abnormal passions.

§ 12. The non-dramatic works of Shakespeare consist of two narrative poems, written in stanzas, and entitled *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*; of the volume of beautiful Sonnets, whose significance has excited so much controversy; and of a few uneven and not too creditable lyrics, which are probably due in the very slightest and most elementary degree to Shakespeare himself—the writer of nothing that is discreditable, and of very little that is uneven. *Venus and Adonis* exhibits the early flush and voluptuous glow of a fervent imagination, tempered by the laboured meditation of form and style natural to a young and careful artist. The story is founded on the common mythological episode of Venus and the young hunter. The character of its style is essentially luxurious and Italian; it has something of the rich and sensuous manner of Ariosto, and is full of his love for the external beauty of nature—the innocent passion for the springtime and the budding flowers of the garden; for its formality and superb pomposity of diction prefers the garden and the artfully designed "wilderness" to the fields and the woods. In its thought and expression, in the delightfully easy but effeminate melody of its verse, there is literally nothing of that fine Hellenic spirit which gives Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* the first place in any company: if we are to liken this charming and frail production of Shakespeare's youth to any classical parallel we must refer it to the unsurpassed femininity

The Poems: "Venus and Adonis."

of Propertius' verse at its best. An increased power over passion is found in *Lucrece*, which is forged of a harder metal; but still the passion is studied, analysed, and laid bare, rather than represented with dramatic force and directness. *Lucrece* must always remain a somewhat unattractive poem: its subject, eminently fitted for the most robust dramatic treatment, is wasted in the stanzas of a narrative poem, which, at the same time, it robs of their quality of repose, giving back nothing in return. But the praise of the *Sonnets* will last as long as the world, for each of them is a miracle of intrinsic beauty. And, as long as criticism exists, there will be found scholars to discuss the intensely personal note of injured love and friendship which is unquestionably sounded throughout these hundred and fifty-four poems. They were printed first in 1609; but the allusion, already quoted, in Meres' *Palladis Tamia* proves that *some* of them were written before 1598—that is, in all probability; for it does not naturally follow that Shakespeare's "sugred Sonnets among his private friends" are those which we actually possess. Assuming, however, this point, we find—this, at least, is the general conclusion of the critics—that some of the present sonnets are addressed to a youth of noble family, and others to a woman of stained character. The poet bitterly complains of the treachery of his friend and the infidelity of his mistress, while he speaks of both in the most ardent language of passionate and melancholy devotion. Beneath the exquisite surface of these short poems there runs a deep undercurrent of pain and sorrow, bringing to our minds the living Shakespeare as clearly as the same genius raised Hamlet or Leontes before our eyes. Nevertheless, there is a school of critics whose part in the controversial game has been to explain away the autobiographical significance of the *Sonnets* upon the theory that they were written on wholly imaginary themes or in the character, and to serve the occasions, of some of the poet's patrons. It must be owned that there is some reason for this view in the general history of the sonnet. But we must take facts as they meet us, and believe, even if the task is very hard, that there was some share of human nature in its greatest student, and that, being at the same time the greatest of all artists and poets, he expressed his human sorrow in divine song, simply because it was his natural mode of expression. On its first appearance, the volume was dedicated by the publisher, Thomas Thorpe, to "The only begetter of these ensuing Sonnets, Mr. W. H."; and the honours of this inscription are likely to be for ever disputed between Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, whom we know to have been one of Shakespeare's patrons, and William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke. This, however, is something of a side issue. Apart from the existence of this strange and painful enigma, the *Sonnets* have their place, and a very marked place, in English

"Lucrece."

The Sonnets.

Autobiographical character of the Sonnets.

literature. The momentous advent of Surrey and Wyatt had revolutionised English poetry: the introduction of the Italian sonnet-form had bent its course in a foreign direction. Those two noble friends and fellow-courtiers had naturalised Petrarch in England: Spenser, similarly, had depended, to a very great extent, upon his acquaintance with Boiardo and Ariosto. The work of leading back poetry from this exotic quarter was especially the work of Shakespeare; and it is in his *Sonnets*, the book of poems which in its entirety follows an utterly foreign and alien form of verse, that he wins back poetry to its really national character. Thus he makes the sonnet itself a vehicle for English thought and speech, and not for a style which is at its best but Anglicised Italian; and, in so doing, he makes the form itself purely national, enfranchising and recreating it. He is the true inventor of the English lyric, of the English sonnet, of all that is most light and lovable, of all that is most profound and most emotional in English poetry: he teaches his successors how to grasp a fleeting thought, to arrest a passing emotion, and to preserve it in the imperishable amber of verse. All this is true of the author of the *Sonnets*. And, this being so, what shall we say of the dramatist, of the poet who controlled the whole gigantic scale of human emotion and passion, even to the most remote and faintly-heard fraction of a semitone; who played upon human life as his perfectly-mastered instrument, improvising at will and transposing his keys as it pleased him; whose improvisations, noted down and varied by his hand, remain for ever our noblest music? If we are permitted to see for ourselves the smallest jot of that incomparable genius, to know but one small corner of that field from which exhaustless harvests are daily and yearly gleaned, we can hardly be thankful enough for the inestimable privilege.

Influence of the Sonnets on literature.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

A.—CLASSIFIED LIST OF SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS, WITH THE SOURCES OF THEIR PLOTS.

I. HISTORY.

Legendary.

(1.) ANCIENT.—*Titus Andronicus* (Tragedy). Probably an older play on the same subject—the *Titus and Vespasian* (1592)—not extant in English. A play called *Lust's Dominion*, attributed to Marlowe, and quoted in Charles Lamb's *Selections*, deals with much the same subject in the same way.

Timon of Athens (Tragedy). Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*. North's *Plutarch*—life of Antony. Possibly Lucian's dialogue *Timon*, from which Boiardo had adopted his *Timone*. An older play, *Timon of Athens* (1600), may have suggested the general subject.

(2.) MEDIEVAL.—*Hamlet* (Tragedy). An older play, *Hamlet*, probably by Thomas Kyd, author of *The Spanish Tragedy*. The *Histoire*

de Hamlet in the *Histoires Tragiques* of François de Belleforest; which, in its turn, was borrowed from Saxo Grammaticus' *Historia Danica*. Belleforest's *Hamlet* was translated into English in 1608, after the play had appeared.

(3.) ANCIENT BRITISH. — *King Lear* (Tragedy). Most of the material is to be found in Holinshed. A play called *The True Chronicle History of King Leir and his Three Daughters* had appeared the year before the play itself (1605). The episode of Gloucester and his sons is drawn from Sidney's *Arcadia* (Bk. ii. ch. 10). "Hints for the speeches of Edgar when feigning madness were drawn from Harsnet's 'Declaration of Popish Impostures,' 1603" (Sidney Lee, *Life of Shakespeare*, pp. 241-2). Samuel Harsnet was master of Pembroke College, Cambridge; afterwards Bishop of Chichester and Norwich; Archbishop of York, 1628-31.

Macbeth (Tragedy). Holinshed's *Chronicle of Scottish History*.

Cymbeline (Tragi-comedy). Groundwork of story from Holinshed, embroidered with an adaptation of Boccaccio's novel of the falsely accused Ginevra (*Decamerone*, day 2, nov. 9). Perhaps Shakespeare used the version of the same story to be found in the collection by "Kynde Kit of Kingston," called *Westward for Smelts*, the first known edition of which is, however, 1620.

ii. *Authentic.*

(1.) ROMAN. — *Julius Cæsar* (Tragedy). North's *Plutarch* (1579): lives of Cæsar, Brutus, and Antony. An earlier *Julius Cæsar* had been acted in 1594 by Shakespeare's company.

Antony and Cleopatra (Tragedy). North's *Plutarch*: life of Antony.

Coriolanus (Tragedy). North's *Plutarch*: life of Coriolanus. There is a story on the same theme in Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*.

(2.) ENGLISH.—*King John*. An adaptation of *The Troublesome Reign of King John* (1591; not Bale's *Kynge Johan*); partly from Holinshed.

The Tragedy of the Two Roses.

Richard II. Mainly from Holinshed; a few touches from Hall. The whole subject suggested by Marlowe's *Edward II.*

Henry IV, part i;

Henry IV, part ii;

Henry V:
Holinshed, and an earlier play called *The Famous Victories of Henry V* (published 1598).

Henry VI, part i. Shakespeare's part (probably very small) derived from Holinshed.

Henry VI, part ii. An older play called *The first part of the Contention betwixt the two famous houses of York and Lancaster* (published 1594).

Henry VI, part iii. A similar play called *The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York* (published 1595).

Richard III. Holinshed and Hall. Possibly *The True Tragedy of Richard III* (published 1594).

Henry VIII. Holinshed and Hall. Cavendish's *Life of Wolsey*, and, possibly, the poem by Thomas Storer of Christ Church, Oxford, on *The Life and Death of Thomas Wolsey, Cardinal* (1599).

II. FICTION.

Love's Labour's Lost (Comedy). No known source, although full of contemporary allusion.

Two Gentlemen of Verona (Comedy). In all probability adapted from an older play, *The History of Felix and Philomena* (1584). The plot is to be found in the *Diana Enamorada* of Montemayor, under the sub-title of "The Shepherdess Filismena." Another romance laid under contribution was Barnabe Rich's *Apollonius and Silla*, adapted from Cinthio (see also *Twelfth-Night*).

Comedy of Errors (Comedy). Possibly *The History of Error*, acted in 1576. Main plot follows the *Menæchmi* of Plautus, with details from the *Amphitruo*.

Romeo and Juliet (Tragedy). The Italian sources are numerous, as the story was frequently treated. Shakespeare's plot is, most probably,

to be traced back to Bandello through Arthur Broke's *Romeus and Juliet* (1562). There also is a version of the story in Painter's *Palace of Pleasure* (1567).

Merchant of Venice (Comedy). Older English plays existed on the same subject—*The Jew*, mentioned by Stephen Gosson in *The School of Abuse*, and Robert Wilson's *Three Ladies of London* (1584), which contains the episode of the Jew Gerontus, and suggests a reminiscence of the ballad of *Gernutus the Jew*. The *Gesta Romanorum* contains, in two of its stories, the elements of Shakespeare's double plot. But the whole treatment in embryo of the play is to be found in Ser Giovanni of Florence's book of tales, *Il Pecorone* (day 4, nov. 1).

Midsummer-Night's Dream (Comedy). The plot is due to Shakespeare alone. For its mechanism he went to many sources, which, having little to do with the actual plot, it is unnecessary to mention. Lord Berners' translation of *Huon of Bordeaux* (1534) probably gave him Oberon and the Fairies.

All's Well that Ends Well (Comedy). The story of Giletta of Narbonne, in Painter's *Palace of Pleasure* (taken from Boccaccio, *Decamerone*, day 3, nov. 9).

Taming of the Shrew (Comedy). A revision of an older play, *The Taming of a Shrew* (1594). The underplot is partly from Gascoigne's *Supposes*, an adaptation of Ariosto's *I Suppositi*.

Merry Wives of Windsor (Comedy). Probably from Giov. Francesco Straparola's *Tredici piacevoli notti* (iv. 4), or the adaptation, "The Two Lovers of Pisa," in *Tarleton's News out of Purgatory*. Hints may have been furnished by *Il Pecorone* (day 1, nov. 2), and a story in *Westward for Smelts* (see *ante*, *Cymbeline*).

Much Ado about Nothing (Comedy). Much is original. For the groundwork of the plot, the Hero episode, there are two Italian sources: the 22nd novel of Bandello and the fifth canto of the *Orlando Furioso*. Probability inclines to the second, which had already been dramatised as *The History of Ariodante and Ginevra* (1583). A hint may have been furnished by Spenser (*Faëry Queen*, Book ii. canto 4, stanzas xix.–xxix.).

As You Like It (Comedy). Lodge's *Rosalynde: Euphues' Golden Legacy* (1590). Hints from Chaucer (*The Cook's Tale of Gamelyn*) and the fencing-manual of Vincenzo Saviolo (1595).

Twelfth-Night (Comedy). The pedigree is intricate. Two Italian plays, both called *Gl' Inganni* ("The Cheats"), may have something to do with it. Another, called *Gl' Ingannati* (1538), was the expansion of a novel by Bandello. An English adaptation of the same tale by Barnabe Rich, called *Apollonius and Silla* (1581), is probably the direct ancestor of Shakespeare's play. Many of Bandello's novels came to England through the French medium of Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques*. The play contains a reference, in the words "the lady of the Strachy" (Act ii. sc. 5), to the novel of Bandello which suggested Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*; but the garbled word "Strachy" for Strozzi, seems to indicate familiarity with a translation rather than with the original.

Troilus and Cressida (Tragi-comedy). A previous play by Dekker and Chettle, *Troilus and Cressida*, now lost, seems to be the origin. There was plenty of English material for the story—*e.g.* Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, Lydgate's *Troy Book*, Caxton's *Recuyles, or Destruction of Troy*. Chapman's *Homer*—that is, as much of it as was published up to this time—was probably of use, but the material was obviously mediæval rather than contemporary.

Othello (Tragedy). Cinthio's novel of *Othello* (in the *Ecatommithi*, decad. iii. nov. 3).

Measure for Measure (Tragi-comedy). Cinthio's novel of *Epitia* (*Ecatommithi*, decad. viii. nov. 5), and also his drama on the same theme; with Whetstone's adaptation in his ten-act play of *Promos and Cassandra* (1578).

Pericles (Comedy). Gower's story of *Apollonius of Tyre* in the *Confessio Amantis*. Lawrence Twyne, in his *Pattern of Painful Adventures*

(1576), translated it from the French. George Wilkins, later (1608) founded a novel on the play.

Winter's Tale (Tragi-comedy). Greene's *Pandosto, the Triumph of Time* (1588), which, in later versions (after 1648), is called *Dorastus and Fawnia.*

The Tempest (Comedy). Source unknown. Idea derived from Sir George Somers' discovery of the Bermudas in 1609, recorded in 1610 by Sylvester Jourdain. Jacob Ayrer (d. 1605) wrote a play called *Die schöne Sidea*, not unlike the *Tempest* in plot, of which it is just possible that Shakespeare may have heard.

The Two Noble Kinsmen (Tragi-comedy). Chaucer's *Knight's Tale.* Two plays on the same subject have been lost—viz. Richard Edwardes' *Palæmon and Arcyte* (1566), and another called *Palamon and Arsett* (1594).

B.—BOOKS USEFUL IN THE STUDY OF SHAKESPEARE.

TEXT.—(1.) *The Cambridge Shakespeare*, ed. W. G. Clark and W. A. Wright (9 vols. 1st ed. 1863–6; 2nd ed. 1887; 3rd ed. 10 vols. 1893), gives in footnotes all the readings of the early editions. (2.) Lionel Booth's reprint of the First Folio (3 parts, 1861, 1863, 1864).

EDITIONS WITH NOTES.—(1.) The Variorum Shakespeare of 1821, known as "Boswell's Malone" (21 vols.), was founded on Edmund Malone's (1741–1812) edition of the plays (10 vols. 1790) and edited by James Boswell the younger. (2.) The Variorum Edition now in publication, ed. Dr. Harold Howard Furness of Philadelphia (vols. i.–xii. 1871–1900), will, when finished, supersede the 1821 edition; but at present (1900) only twelve plays have been published. (3.) Other well-known English and American editions of the present century are those of Alexander Dyce (1798–1869), 9 vols. 1857; Howard Staunton (1810–1874), 3 vols. 1868–70; Charles Knight ("Pictorial" edition), 8 vols. 1838–43; John Payne Collier, 8 vols. 1841–4, and, again, privately printed, 1878; Richard Grant White, Boston, Mass., 12 vols. 1857–65. More recent than these are Mr. F. A. Marshall's "Henry Irving Shakespeare," 8 vols. 1888–90, and the selected plays published in separate volumes by the Clarendon Press (ed. W. G. Clark and W. A. Wright). C. Prætorius' reprints of the quartos (1885–6) are most useful to students.

GLOSSARIES, etc.—Mrs. Cowden-Clarke's *Concordance to the Plays* (1845); Mrs. H. H. Furness' *Concordance to the Poems* (1875); Mr. John Bartlett's *Concordance to Plays and Poems* (1895); Alexander Schmidt's *Shakespeare Lexicon*, 2 vols. 1874.

GRAMMAR, VERSIFICATION.—Dr. E. A. Abbott's *Shakespearian Grammar* (1st ed. 1869, new ed. 1893); W. Sidney Walker's *Shakespeare and Shakespeare's Versification* (1854); Charles Bathurst's *Difference in Shakespeare's Versification* (1857); Mr. F. G. Fleay's *Shakespeare Manual* (1876).

SOURCES.—J. P. Collier and W. C. Hazlitt's *Shakespeare's Library* (1875); F. Douce's *Illustrations of Shakespeare* (1807); Simrock *On the Plots of Shakespeare's Plays* (Shakespeare Society, 1850). Some of the old plays and novels on which Shakespeare worked have been reprinted, chiefly by the Shakespeare Society (1841–53) and the New Shakspere Society (founded 1874), whose *Allusion-Books* are most valuable.

COMMENTARIES, etc. (*a*) ENGLISH.—S. T. Coleridge's *Notes and Lectures on Shakespeare and other Poets*, collected and ed. T. Ashe, 1883; W. Hazlitt's *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays* (1817); Professor Dowden's *Shakspere, his Mind and Art* (1874); A. C. Swinburne, *A Study of Shakespeare* (1880); Mrs. Jameson's *Characteristics of* (Shakespeare's) *Women* (1833); Lady Martin's *Shakespeare's Heroines* (1885); Richard G. Moulton's *Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist* (1885); F. S. Boas' *Shakspere and his Predecessors* (1895).

(*b*) FOREIGN.—(1.) American: H. N. Hudson's *Shakespeare, his Life, Art, and Character* (1881). (2.) German: A. W. Schlegel's

Shakespeare and the Drama (English translation, 1815); Heine's *Shakespeare's Heroines* (translation 1895); Ulrici's *Shakespeare's Dramatische Kunst* (1839; several edd. in English); Gervinus, *Shakespeare Commentaries* (1848–9; best English ed. 1875); F. A. T. Kreyssig, *Vorlesungen über Shakespeare* (1858) and *Shakespeare-Fragen* (1871). Kreyssig's work is the best æsthetic commentary in German since Schlegel, although the tendency to overrate German criticism has attached an immense importance to Gervinus and Ulrici. Hertzberg's prefaces to certain plays (in the Deutsche Shakespeare-Gesellschaft's edition of Schlegel and Tieck's translation) are very valuable with regard to the metrical question. The D. S.-Gesellschaft has also published a volume yearly since 1865, containing many articles of the highest importance, including Karl Elze's *Essays* (translated (1874). (3.) French: Guizot, *Sur la Vie et les Œuvres de Shakespeare* and *Shakespeare et son Temps* (1852); Alfred Mézières' *Shakespeare, ses Œuvres et ses Critiques* (1860); Victor Hugo's *Shakespeare* (1864). (4.) The *William Shakespeare* of the Danish scholar Georg Brandes (English translation, 2 vols. 1898) has provoked considerable attention. It was first published at Copenhagen (1895). Although most European and some Asiatic countries have produced some translations, and some desultory criticisms have appeared in Russia, Spain, etc., no other country has produced any elaborate critical work.

BIOGRAPHY.—The obscure life of Shakespeare has been treated by most of the editors and commentators; but their researches, as a whole, are concerned with the stage history of his time rather than with his biography. The most important stage in this difficult investigation was the publication of the voluminous *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare*, by J. O. Halliwell (better known to-day as Halliwell-Phillipps), 1881. The last (7th) edition of this, much increased, appeared in 1887. Previously, Samuel Neil's *Shakespeare: a Critical Biography* (1861), and Karl Elze's German *William Shakespeare: a Literary Biography* (1876, translated 1888), were useful contributions; but Neil's work suffers from the readiness with which he accepted Payne Collier's mischievous forgeries. Since Halliwell-Phillipps' book, Mr. F. G. Fleay has published, in addition to other works, a *Life of Shakespeare* (1886); and the topographical literature relating to Stratford-on-Avon and its neighbourhood has been much augmented. The most scholarly contribution to the subject of recent years is Mr. Sidney Lee's *Life of William Shakespeare* (1899), which not only shows great research and knowledge of the whole period, but is likely to remain for many years the standard work on the subject, since it condenses all the available information on the sources and date of the plays. Mr. Lee's view on the question of the *Sonnets* is ingenious, but unorthodox, and has at present received very little support. A series of articles, *The True Shakespeare*, by Mr. Frank Harris (*Saturday Review*, 1898), attempts to deduce the personal character of Shakespeare from the internal evidence of the plays; but, although brilliant, the general theory adopted is unsound and open to contradiction. Mr. W. I. Rolfe's *Shakespeare, the Boy*, and H. S. and C. W. Ward's *Shakespeare's Town and Times* are interesting for their description of Elizabethan Stratford.

C.—LIST OF PLAYS FALSELY ATTRIBUTED TO SHAKESPEARE.

Arden of Feversham, a play of the type known as *bourgeois* tragedy, from the story of a murder at Faversham (1551). Original in Holinshed. This is a very fine specimen of its rather disagreeable order. Shakespeare's part in it, tentatively supported by Mr. Swinburne, is very doubtful. It was licensed and published in 1592. Lamb, in his *Specimens*, quotes the extraordinary scene (which has something of Marlowe's force) between Alice Arden and her paramour. There are two modern reprints; one (now out of print),

ed. Arthur Symons, in Vizetelly's "Mermaid" series; another, ed. Rev. R. Bayne, in Mr. J. M. Dent's "Temple Dramatists."

The Birth of Merlin, "by William Rowley and William Shakespeare," printed 1662. Nothing of Shakespeare. Reprinted at Halle, 1887.

Cardenio, "by Fletcher and Shakespeare." Not licensed till 1653, and now lost. Probably from Cervantes' tale of Cardenio in *Don Quixote*. Shakespeare's actors are known to have produced a play called *Cardenno* in 1613. Fletcher's fondness for Spanish comedies makes it possible that this may have been, at any rate, his work.

Edward III, an unequal, but not very interesting historical play, hinging on the legend of the Order of the Garter. It has received a good deal of attention from Shakespearean critics; and the obvious influence of Marlowe's style in it points to a distant possibility of Shakespearean authorship. Licensed 1595, published 1596. Reprinted in Edward Capell's *Prolusions* (1760). There is a recent edition, ed. Mr. G. C. M. Smith, in the "Temple Dramatists."

Faire Em, a dull and halting comedy, acted by Shakespeare's company, probably about 1592. Published 1631, and included in an edition of Shakespearean plays in Charles II's library.

Locrine, a dull, rhetorical tragedy in Marlowe's less happy vein, "by W. S.," printed 1595. Borrowed largely from Robert Greene's *Selimus*, also of doubtful authenticity. Appeared in the Third Folio (1663), and, with the other Third Folio plays (including *Pericles*), was placed in the supplementary volume to Hazlitt's edition of the text.

The Merry Devil of Edmonton, a humorous comedy of considerable merit. Licensed 1607, published 1608. There is an edition in the "Temple Dramatists."

Mucedorus, a comedy, published 1598 and again in 1610. It comes to its doubtful reputation through Charles II's library, where it was bound together with *Faire Em* in a volume entitled "Shakespeare. Vol. I." Payne Collier reprinted it in his Shakespeare of 1878, but without any substantial reason.

Sir John Oldcastle, published 1600, and included in the Third Folio and Hazlitt, "by William Shakespeare." Said to be by Munday, Drayton, and others.

The London Prodigal, a comedy, published 1605, and included in the Third Folio and Hazlitt, "by William Shakespeare."

The Puritan, or the Widow of Watling Street, a similar comedy, "by W. S.," published 1607. In the Third Folio and Hazlitt.

Thomas Lord Cromwell, "by W. S." Licensed and published 1602; 2nd ed. 1613. In the Third Folio and Hazlitt.

The Troublesome Reign of King John, published 1591, in edition of 1611, "by W. Sh.," and in 1622, "by W. Shakespeare." The foundation of Shakespeare's *King John* (1595).

The Two Noble Kinsmen, "by Fletcher and Shakespeare," is almost certainly in part Shakespeare's, although there is a present tendency to allow most of the conjectural part to Massinger. Published 1634. Edited and reprinted several times. The best reprint is that of the *New Shakspere Society*, 1876, ed. Mr. H. Littledale. There is also a reprint in the "Temple Dramatists." For sources, see Section A of notes to this chapter.

A Warning to Fair Women (1599), another of the domestic tragedies, probably by William Rowley.

The Yorkshire Tragedy, "by William Shakespeare," published 1608. A one-act tragedy full of horrors, founded (like *Arden of Feversham*) on a contemporary murder, enhanced by additional details from similar crimes. Reprinted in the Third Folio and in Hazlitt. It is assigned with some probability to George Wilkins, the supposed partner of Shakespeare in *Timon* and *Pericles*, whose *Miseries of Enforced Marriage* (1607) treated the same theme.

For a chronological list of Shakespeare's genuine plays see the Appendices to the present volume.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LATER ELIZABETHAN AND JACOBEAN DRAMATISTS.

§ 1. Characteristics of the lesser dramatists. § 2. First period.—BEN JONSON: Life; Character; Comedies; Tragedies; Masques. § 3. CHAPMAN: the tragedies borrowed from French history. § 4. DEKKER; MARSTON. § 5. The Silver Age: BEAUMONT and FLETCHER. § 6. MIDDLETON. § 7. WEBSTER. § 8. TOURNEUR. § 9. THOMAS HEYWOOD and the *bourgeois* drama. § 10. The decadence: MASSINGER. § 11. FORD. § 12. SHIRLEY and the transition to Restoration comedy.

§ 1. THE greater glory of Shakespeare has somewhat obscured the light, not only of his predecessors, but of his contemporaries and successors in the drama. But, from the closing years of Elizabeth's reign down to a period as late as 1640, the drama was unquestionably the chief method of literary expression; and, among the writers of that age which we loosely call Elizabethan, the dramatists easily hold the first place. They were men, as we shall see, of all conditions in life, whose genius was wonderfully uniform; it is almost impossible to select one from them, after Shakespeare, and hold him up to exclusive admiration. Generally speaking, they were well acquainted with one another, and their habit of writing plays in conjunction has been a fruitful source of trouble to critics. At the present day their study is come into fashion, and most readers know that the greatness of the Elizabethan drama cannot be measured by the greatness of any other department of literature; but the body of constant students is almost inevitably small. In construction and form many of these writers were hopelessly deficient, and many plays which are full of fine passages are ruined by a chaotic plot, or the intrusion of a totally irrelevant underplot. This of itself is wearisome; and, in addition, the unmitigated coarseness of thought and language which pervades the best tragedies and is the life and soul of some of the comedies, is quite unpalatable and repellent to most readers. But it must never be forgotten that this freedom of speech was a superficial habit of the day, and that no nation and no drama could possibly be more intolerant of vice than England and her drama in the age of Elizabeth. Similarly characteristic is the

The lesser dramatists.

Their general defects.

huffing, extravagant tone of many stage heroes of the time, ridiculous in our own day, but natural at an epoch when men did not hesitate to set their own price upon themselves. And the reader who remembers the different conditions of the English character before and after the Civil War, and is ready to overlook weaknesses of construction in his estimate of these extraordinary men and their profound analysis of human character and passion, will find ample compensation for the faults of taste that have at first dismayed him.

§ 2. Second only to Shakespeare is the monumental name of BEN JONSON, whose genius, in its massiveness and originality, is solitary and unique. He seems to have been born in London, but his grandfather had come from Carlisle, and he himself said that his family, as he thought, was from Annandale, north of the Border. His father died a month before his birth, and his mother, left in some poverty, married a second husband, who was a master-bricklayer. Jonson was educated at Westminster School, largely, we may believe, by the kindness of Camden, who was then second master; and here he laid the foundation of that scholarship which, judging from his plays, was his devouring passion. It has been a pious article of belief that he continued his studies at St. John's College, Cambridge; he himself, however, in his conversations with Drummond of Hawthornden, omits any mention of this; while he expressly says that the honorary degrees which he received from both Universities were due "to their favour, not to his study." At any rate, he went, in process of time, into his stepfather's brickyard, and soon exchanged this ungrateful bondage for the army. He fought for a while in the Netherlands, and, having thus laid the foundation of his experience, returned to London about 1592 or 1593, and married not long after. It was during the four or five years following that his genius was matured. We know nothing at all of their events, save the birth of his son in 1596; but it is not merely imagination which supposes that, during this period, he pursued, not only his classical studies, but also his intimate familiarity with the life of London—that minute knowledge of the middle and lower classes and their manners which is one of the most evident features of his work. No method exists, at any rate, by which we can trace the development of his art as we can that of Shakespeare. In 1597 we find him as a player and engaged as a playwright, and in 1598, *Every Man in His Humour*, the first of his great comic masterpieces, was acted at the Globe Theatre. Shakespeare and Burbage took parts in it. This was not the present version, which was written about 1606 and published, with a dedication to Camden, in 1616, but a version in which the characters or "humours" of the play bore Italian names typical of their dispositions. This earlier edition was published in 1601. We must not, of course, imagine that this was Jonson's

BEN JONSON (1573?–1637).

Beginning of Jonson's career as a playwright.

first play; but it is certain that his apprenticeship to his art was short, and that now, while still a very young man, he came forward with considerable authority and a very definite method of his own. It was at this time, however, that, by fighting a duel with the actor, Gabriel Spencer, and killing him, he was, in his own words, "brought near the gallows." While in prison he was converted to the Roman communion by a priest who was probably his fellow-prisoner. He was acquitted, but, with a sturdy sincerity, maintained his faith for twelve years amid the manifold dangers to which it was then subject.

His first imprisonment.

Every Man Out of His Humour (1599) was acted at the Globe soon after his release, and was presented, with a very flattering epilogue, before Queen Elizabeth, who was duly pleased with this learned and witty satire. Its success led to its publication in 1600, and, four months after, the earlier comedy, which had hitherto existed for the stage alone, saw the light in print. In 1599, too, he wrote plays in conjunction with Dekker and Chettle, and to the early part of this year seems to belong the play usually printed in his works, *The Case is Altered*, in which he worked with an unknown poet. But, in 1600, he returned to single handed work with his third comedy, *Cynthia's Revels, or the Fountain of Self-Love*, in which he satirised the "humours" of the Court. In this play he pointed his satire directly at Marston, who appears as Hedon, and at Dekker as Anaides; and, for the next two or three years, he was occupied in his famous feud with the minor dramatists of his time, who naturally came into collision with this blunt, solitary, confident writer. *Cynthia's Revels* was acted at the Blackfriars by the children of Queen Elizabeth's Chapel; and, in 1601, this same company brought out *The Poetaster, or his Arraignment*, in which Jonson pilloried Marston and Dekker, as Dryden, much later in the century, pilloried Settle and Shadwell. The scene of the play was the Court of Augustus; Jonson himself posed as Horace, and it is probable that by Virgil he intended the illustrious Chapman. Immediately after, Dekker retorted with *Satiromastix*, which ought to have made an earlier appearance, but was forestalled by its answer in *The Poetaster*. This quarrel gave Jonson a temporary distaste for comedy, and caused him to retire for a short period. In 1603, however, he reappeared at the Globe as the author of *Sejanus, his Fall*, a fresh tribute in another kind to that imperial Court with whose manners he was so familiar. The play was above the heads of his audience. It was assailed by the critics, and its sentiments were made the colour of a charge against Jonson, who had to appear before the Privy Council and assure them that no treason was intended. He fell into more serious trouble in the following year. Marston, won over by his immense genius,

The Comedies of the "humours."

Jonson's quarrel with Marston and Dekker.

made friends with, and dedicated his *Malcontent* to him, and the two were concerned, with George Chapman, in the performance and publication of *Eastward Ho!* The play contained an alleged libel on the Scots; the three, early in 1605, were imprisoned, and the report was that their ears and noses were to be cut off. Jonson's mother provided her son (this rests on Drummond's authority) with a paper full of "lusty, strong poison," which he was to take before the execution of the sentence. However, James I, whose own classical taste must have given him some appreciation of Jonson's genius, remitted the punishment, and the three dramatists were released.

Jonson's second imprisonment.

1605 was the year of Jonson's masterpiece, *Volpone, or the Fox*. That great and terrible satirical comedy was played at the Globe, and, in 1607, was published with a dedication to the Universities, where it had been received with applause. This play was the first of a new series. *Epicœne, or the Silent Woman*, was performed in 1609 by the children of her Majesty's revels, and, in 1610, was followed by *The Alchemist*, a comedy whose superior construction and better-humoured tone has made it more popular than *Volpone*. It was about this time that, out of conviction, Jonson returned to the Church of England. In 1611, he went back to tragedy for a moment, and, in *Catiline, his Conspiracy*, painted a companion picture to *Sejanus*. This is said to have been his favourite play; but its merits were, in the eyes of a less cultured audience, its faults, and its success was not conspicuous. When, in 1614, *Bartholomew Fair* appeared at the Hope Theatre—it was acted by the players in the service of the Princess Elizabeth—the audience was far more appreciative. The play was an inimitable picture of London manners and contained a brilliant satire on the Puritans. It was the end of his great period, whose fruits are contained within the covers of his folio edition, published in 1616. *Bartholomew Fair*, however, was apparently rather too late for this collection. *The Devil is an Ass*, an amusing and memorable comedy, but far below the old level of his work, belongs to 1616. Jonson was now the head of a school of poets—the famous Tribe of Ben—to which, it has been noted, almost every pre-Restoration poet, with the exception of Milton, belonged. His own poetical skill is conspicuous in his long series of masques, beginning with *The Queen's Masque of Blackness*, acted at Whitehall on Twelfth Night, 1605, and in his numerous occasional poems, collected in *The Forest* and *Underwoods*. From 1616 to 1625, his attention was given up very much to his masques; but in 1618 he made his journey to Hawthornden, and there, in his conversations with Drummond, gave utterance to those casual criticisms which, invaluable as they are, have left a misleading impression upon posterity. Jonson, like most men who rate their own genius highly, said more of his contemporaries than

Second period of Comedy.

he meant ; at any rate, Drummond was unauthorised in publishing these records and did lasting harm to his guest's memory.

As a Court Entertainer, Jonson had a pleasant post, which, for a time, put an end to his comedies. But Inigo Jones, whom he had satirised in *Bartholomew Fair*, appears to have procured his dismissal from royal favour soon after Charles I's accession. Jonson then went back to the stage. His final comedies were—*The Staple of News* (1625), the disastrous *New Inn* (1629), whose failure was the motive of his apostrophe to himself, "Come, leave the loathèd stage," *The Magnetic Lady* (1632), *A Tale of a Tub* (1633), and the unfinished fragment called *The Sad Shepherd*, published in 1641. With the exception of the last, in which his lyric faculty is at its best, these plays show a gradual decline. To his death he was a zealous student. It was during these latter years that he began his *English Grammar* (1640) and set himself to learn Welsh ; his *Discoveries* (1641) gave solid and weighty hints towards his private theories of criticism ; and at his death he left behind him some fragments representing his study of the Fathers. He died on the 6th of August, 1637, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. His best memorial is the inscription on the floor above his grave, "O rare Ben Jonson!"

Final period.

Even the most casual student of Jonson's work must be struck by its intense intellectual vigour. No writer of the English Renaissance leaves behind him such an impression of power. Each of his plays has a distinct personality of its own ; each stands out as a great monolith carved over all its faces with the hieroglyphics of learning and observation. Among the dramatists of his age, Jonson is a lonely figure. He had little of that sympathy with human nature which is the eminent quality, not only of Shakespeare's work, but of the work of Beaumont and Fletcher, Webster, Massinger, and the rest. Strong and self-confident, he despised the natural weakness of other people. He looked upon human life and its epitome, the life of London, as a vast surface covered with moral deformities, as the field of knavery, lying, and all forms of affectation ; and, with this fixed opinion, he became the critic and satirist, not merely of vice, but of the most ordinary foibles.

Singularity of Jonson.

His personal character.

He has given us his own character in his description of Asper, the "Presenter or Author" of *Every Man out of His Humour*. "He is of an ingenious and free spirit, eager, and constant in reproof, without fear controlling the world's abuses. One whom no servile hope of gain, or frosty apprehension of danger, can make to be a parasite, either to time, place, or opinion." No other writer of English has carried this unpopular disposition so fearlessly, and with so little bluster. His own faith in the merit of his work is, of course, amply evident. For example, he cast *Cynthia's Revels* at his audience with the unequivocal cry, "By —— 'tis

Portraits of himself in the plays.

good, and, if you like 't, you may," and with a Latin motto which frankly declared that his object was not popularity, "There's someone blushing! He pales, he gasps, he's all a-shake with hate. This is my aim: now comes my pleasure in my song!" Jonson, if he is to be compared with any poet, must be placed side by side with Juvenal. Where he flattered, he spoke what he felt, and his admiration for Elizabeth, even at a singularly unpopular epoch in her reign, was genuine, and not an echo of that adulation of courtiers, "making," as Chapman said—

> "Demigods
> Of their great nobles; and of their old queen
> An ever young and most immortal goddess."

We see Jonson in his Asper, in the Crites of *Cynthia's Revels*, whose soul was "hurt with mere intention on follies," and in the Horace of *The Poetaster*, soured by the spite of lesser writers—in all cases cold, more ready to blame than praise, but with a moral standard far higher than that of his age, stooping to occasional excesses, but never suffering his soul to be corroded by vice.

Jonson's Comedies.

His great plays are in three natural divisions, the first of which includes the four comedies of the "humours," *Every Man in His Humour*, *Every Man out of His Humour*, *Cynthia's Revels*, and *The Poetaster*. These plays, however, do not represent a gradual improvement, but rather the opposite. In the first he is the genial comic writer, who has gone for his subject to the rich middle classes and has selected a number of types, labelling each with its particular foible. There is the inimitable "Paul's man," Captain Bobadill, given to startling anecdotes and loud-mouthed profanities; Master Stephen, the country boor, inflamed with the desire of gentlemanly accomplishments, and copying Bobadill's strange oaths to that end; Master Matthew, the town gull, his counterpart and antithesis; George Downright, the plain squire; and Brainworm, with his endless plots and ingenuities. This method of presenting a single peculiarity instead of the whole man does not always succeed in producing the most life-like results; and, when these gentlemen were known, in the first instance, by Italian names, the play was probably less cheerful. Its deficiencies, however, are fully covered by Jonson's profound knowledge of the life with which he is dealing. His masterly realism saves the gentle satire from becoming caricature. The play reminds us, for very similar reasons, of Dickens' pictures of London life; and it is interesting to note that, in 1845, Dickens himself took the part of Bobadill in a revival of the play. The next play, *Every Man out of His Humour*, is far less convincing, and its tone is saturnine and bitter. The characters are all presented under appropriate Italian names, which give it the air

"Every Man in His Humour" (1598).

"Every Man out of His Humour" (1599).

of an allegory or morality. The subject is a rather unnatural attempt to improve upon the earlier one; for here we have types who, instead of following their natural humours, affect artificial peculiarities and perform the strangest vagaries. Plot there is none; the types are wheeled on and off the stage like waxworks. No one can say that the piece is unreadable: the humours of Puntarvolo, the "very Jacob's staff of compliment," and of Sogliardo, the "essential clown," who "comes up every term to learn to take tobacco, and see new Motions," are enough to redeem it from this accusation; but, on the other hand, there is no life in it; it is a medley of bitter humour and learned allusions. Indeed, Jonson's erudition was a hindrance rather than a help to his art. In *Cynthia's Revels* he becomes more recondite; his types are taken, not from men, but from spirits, and their humours are the only life-like thing about them. Moreover, his satire becomes more limited and more acrid. He takes the Court to task for its idle affectations, and drowns it in the flood of his sarcasm. Finally, in *The Poetaster*, he is positively venomous. To direct his satire at his personal enemies, men of less genius than himself, he uses the machinery of past history and represents the personages of the Augustan Court in the light of their humours. The splendid ingenuity of the satire has saved these two pieces; but, if drama is the transference of human passions to the stage, they are not drama. Even considered as satire, their real value and the magnificence of their invention is obscured by pedantry.

"Cynthia's Revels" (1600).

"The Poetaster" (1601).

The second group of comedies, *Volpone*, *Epicœne*, *The Alchemist*, and *Bartholomew Fair*, are the fruit of Jonson's maturity. It is easy to decide that *Volpone* and *The Alchemist* are the best of the four, but opinions as to their relative excellence must depend upon the individual reader. In both, with their pitiless exposure of human frailty and their indictment of human wickedness, a sordid tinge predominates. *Volpone* is, throughout, painful to read. The rascally subject of the play, with his horrible parasite, his love of Mammon, his feigned sicknesses, his cheats and knaveries, is a masterpiece of indignant satire. Under the lash of Jonson's virtuous wrath, his atrocities become hugely magnified, and the spectacle is, in the end, supremely morbid. The crowd of rogues and sharpers who are his gulls adds to the impression; there is no virtue in the piece. Celia, the injured wife, is brought in to be the centre of an important and not very savoury episode; the ingenious knight, Sir Politick Would-be, whose projects, falling not far short of the famous proposal "to keep the Menai Bridge from rust by boiling it in wine," are the amusing features of the piece, is nothing but an arrant fool, and is under no debt to Jonson's human kindness. The turns of the plot, Volpone's recoveries, his disguises, his Protean behaviour at the trial, are

"Volpone" (1605).

difficult to follow. But, in spite of its singular brutality of manner, it is not going too far to say that this play is, from a purely literary point of view, the greatest satire in English, and one of the finest in the world. Sir Politick Would-be still keeps up Jonson's tradition of "humours," and the characters still bear Italian names in the old fashion; but the scene is fixed in Venice, and there is enough natural colour to save the play from unreality. But Jonson had little of the contemporary curiosity for things Italian, and, all said and done, his Venice is palpably a *nom de guerre* for London. And there is no doubt that the superior fame of *The Alchemist* is due, not so much to its simple and connected plot, as to its atmosphere, the London which Jonson knew by heart. Jonson comes down from his pedestal; he relaxes the intolerant frown with which he has outfaced crime, and condescends to a subject less fearful than the theme of *Volpone*. It may be said that he saw only two kinds of men, rogues and fools, and that, while he hated the one, he cordially despised the other. In *The Alchemist* he shows a little more sympathy. His theme is very simple. A rascally servant, left in charge of a town house, admits into it his accomplices, a *soi-disant* alchemist and a disreputable woman, and the plot turns upon their various devices to enrich themselves at the expense of society in general. The result is comedy rather than satire. The fools of the piece are really brilliant: Sir Epicure Mammon, with his visions and his carnal ideals, is drawn with a humour in which there is just the right amount of lenient scorn. On the other hand, the accomplices are scoundrels, but their second-rate cleverness is amusing enough to redeem them from infamy; and the scene in which Dol Common prophesies to the bewildered Sir Epicure is one of the most mirthful and memorable scenes in English comedy. The gulls who crowd to this temple of alchemy are, of course, portrayed from the side of their prevailing "humours." Sir Epicure Mammon, Pertinax Surly, Tribulation Wholesome and his deacon Ananias, Kastrill, the "angry boy," and his sister Dame Pliant, and Abel Drugger, the tobacconist, have names which speak for themselves, and indicate what we have to expect. Moreover, Jonson, in touching the philosopher's stone, hit upon a subject which suited his erudition, and the play is full of passages pointing to his miraculous and outlandish learning. *Epicœne* is another picture of London life, full of the usual number of "humours," but distinctly inferior to *The Alchemist*, and even to *Bartholomew Fair*. This last play is Jonson's triumph in pure realism, and, if its extraordinary coarseness has hindered its popularity, it only adds to its artistic completeness—assuming, of course, that the art is of a low order. The play is a direct and lively *genre* picture of the humours of the great fair at Smithfield, pointed

"*The Alchemist*" (1610).

"*Epicœne*" (1609) and "*Bartholomew Fair*" (1614).

with satire and full of droll contemporary allusions. Its main object was to make fun of the Puritans, and, in Rabbi Zeal-of-the-Land Busy, Jonson drew one of his most successful types. To find anything like *Bartholomew Fair* in English art, we must go back to Skelton's *Tunning of Elynour Rummyng*, or forward to Burns' *Jolly Beggars*.

Jonson's pair of tragedies are essentially of the learned order of play, and it is possible that some critics, standing upon their superior culture, have made rather too much of them. It is, however, quite indisputable that Jonson, in each case, was thoroughly in love with his subject, and that the tragedies, granting them to be unfit for the popular stage, and putting them out of comparison with Shakespeare's Roman plays, are masterpieces of style and learning. Jonson himself preferred *Catiline*, and the person of Cicero gave him a good excuse for rhetoric; but there seems to be a general prejudice in favour of *Sejanus*. The reader who knows his Tacitus and Juvenal will probably share this. One can enter into the spirit of *Sejanus*, which, with all its devotion to classical form, is nevertheless a spirited, if not a characteristic, English tragedy. The subject of *Catiline*, on the other hand, affords less dramatic material, and the treatment is far more frigid. *Sejanus* is interesting, too, on account of its position in Jonson's work. *The Poetaster*, its immediate predecessor, with its plot founded upon a flimsy basis of imperial history, may have suggested a more solid treatment of another Roman subject; while it is only natural to imagine that the nefarious alliance of emperor and favourite in *Sejanus* formed more than a hint for the similar connection of magnifico and parasite in *Volpone*. The study of Juvenal, which, in *Volpone*, has so strong an influence on Jonson's spirit, is materially evident in the style of *Sejanus*.

Jonson's Tragedies: "Sejanus" (1603) and "Catiline" (1611).

Finally, Jonson's poetry, as contained in his masques, his occasional verses, and his *Sad Shepherd*, is not his least contribution to English literature. We can gather some evidence from his plays as to his exquisite power as a lyric poet—for instance, the Echo song, "Slow, slow, fresh fount," in *Cynthia's Revels*—and his position as Laureate and Court Entertainer gave him opportunity for the display of these gifts. He wrote nearly thirty masques and lyric entertainments, which were exhibited at Court and in the provinces with magnificent scenery and excellent music. Indeed, the origin of stage scenery was the Court masque: after the Restoration, the scenic "operas," exhibited by Sir William D'Avenant and others, and forming a medium between the masque and the ordinary play, introduced it upon the regular stage. A selection from Jonson's masques would necessarily include his two great wedding masques, *Hymenæi*, written for Essex's wedding in 1606, and *Hue and Cry after Cupid*, for Lord Haddington's wedding in 1608; *The Masque*

Jonson's Masques.

of Queens (1609), *The Masque of Oberon* (1611), and *Pan's Anniversary* (1625) are also noteworthy. Of his songs, *Drink to me only with thine eyes* is known to everybody. His verses take the form of epitaphs and epigrams, written in the manner of Martial. They are numerous, and without exception valuable, not only to the lover of strenuous, polished verse, but to the student of literary history. Above them all shines his splendid tribute to the memory of Shakespeare, a loud denial to all the charges of envy which have been brought against his name. Shakespeare "was not of an age, but for all time." Ben Jonson's glory is less, but his immortality would be assured independently of Shakespeare's. This can be said of no other dramatist of the age; for the excellence of Fletcher, Webster, and the rest, is not so much their own as a reflected glory.

§ 3. The learned GEORGE CHAPMAN, who has justly been called the *doyen* of Elizabethan drama, was probably born at Hitchin in Hertfordshire, and certainly went to Oxford about 1574. Twenty years later, at the meridian of life, he published his first extant work, the curious and difficult poem known as *The Shadow of Night* (1594). The interval had evidently been devoted to learning and study, whose fruits appeared in the translation of seven books (i. ii. and vii.–xi.) of the *Iliad* (1598). Before this, however, he had begun as a playwright with a dull comedy, *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria* (1596); and again, in 1599, *An Humorous Day's Mirth* effectually belied its title. *The World Runs on Wheels* (1599) underwent several changes, and, in its final form, seems to be the *All Fools* of 1605. This year (1605) was an epoch in Chapman's life. *All Fools* was his best comedy, and, side by side with it, appeared his double tragedy of *The Conspiracy and Revenge of Charles, Duke of Byron*, which was not published till 1608. It was in 1605 also that his part in the unfortunate *Eastward Ho!* (see p. 217) brought him into prison. After his release, he returned to comedy, his plays of 1606 being *The Gentleman Usher* and *Monsieur D'Olive*. *Bussy D'Ambois*, another tragedy, was published in 1607, after which Chapman returned to his Homeric work. His *Iliad* was published in complete form in 1611, and was one of the most remarkable works of that remarkable year, the year of the Authorised Version and of *Winter's Tale*. Two comedies, *May Day* (1611), and *The Widow's Tears* (1612), followed. *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois* was published in 1613; after which he devoted himself, for eighteen years, to other occupations. His only extant masque, *The Memorable Masque of the Inns of Court*, was acted at Whitehall when Princess Elizabeth was married (1613). Its staging cost over £1000. His *Odyssey* crowned his scholarly labours before 1615. In 1631, at the age of seventy-two, a patriarch among the younger playwrights of Charles I's reign, he returned to dramatic writing with the publication of a new

GEORGE CHAPMAN (1559?–1634).

tragedy, *Cæsar and Pompey*. This was actually his last individual work; but two tragedies, professing to be posthumous discoveries, were published in 1654—*Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*, and *Revenge for Honour*. An interesting circumstance of his later years is his partnership with Shirley, thirty-seven years his junior, and the youngest of pre-Restoration playwrights. Their joint comedy, *The Ball*, and their *Tragedy of Chabot, Admiral of France*, concluding Chapman's series of French historical plays, were published in 1639. Chapman himself was already dead. The oldest of the dramatists of the Golden Age, older than Marlowe or Shakespeare, died in 1634, and lies in St. Giles' Churchyard.

Later criticism of Chapman.

Two later poets have probably done as much as any critic to fix the popular reputation of Chapman. Dryden, in his preface to *The Spanish Friar* (1681), declared, not without affectation, "A modern poet used to sacrifice every year a Statius to Virgil's *manes*, and I have indignation enough to burn a *D'Ambois* annually to the memory of Jonson." Keats, on the other hand, paid a fine compliment to the translation of Homer in his well-known sonnet, "Much have I travelled in the realms of gold." Chapman's narrative and epic poetry must remain his chief claim on posterity. His Homer, with its ponderous, stately metre, its quaintness and richness of phrase, has the first place among those Elizabethan translations which, by their very individuality and freedom, renew the honour of their original. His continuation of Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, although the heavy pregnancy of style and thought form the utmost contrast to Marlowe's suave and fluent directness of language and imagery, succeeded where other poets failed. Where he had an original to work upon, he was admirable; where he himself was original, he was diffuse and obscure. Obscurity, amounting sometimes to a mere trick of polysyllables, is the fault of his dramatic work; his extraordinary involution of thought, the multitude and clumsiness of his images, destroy him for most readers. To say that he is a Statius to Jonson's Virgil is an easy but false analogy. As the scholars of the English drama, the two poets are co-equal. Jonson, the satirist, turned his attention to Roman models; Chapman, far more subjective and introspective, went back to Greek antiquity. Jonson's dramatic style, sonorous enough, is for the most part prosaic; Chapman, without much control over his metre, had an eminently poetical mind. Jonson's almost certain admiration for Chapman, who, as we have said, was probably the Virgil of *The Poetaster*, may of itself disarm Dryden's analogy.

Chapman's scholarship compared with Jonson's.

Chapman's style.

But Chapman's genius was not careful of the type; it is one of the most unhewn productions of Nature. With a sense of rhythm, he might have marshalled his words with the ordered, pompous resonance of Marlowe;

as it is, his style is chaotic, obstructed by the *débris* of a too fertile intellect. It is always doubtful whether he means too much or too little; it is highly probable that now and then he means nothing at all. In addition, his thought, extravagant as it is, always preserves a certain austerity. If this saves him from the atrocious bombast of Marston, it leaves him far beneath Marlowe's audacity. Bussy D'Ambois and Byron are bold, self-confident braggarts, but their stock of mythological simile does not put them on a level with Tamburlaine. Nevertheless, Chapman's importance in the history of English drama is unquestionable. As a comic writer, he is of little importance. *All Fools* is a good play, with strongly Shakespearean features, belonging to the same class of comedy as *The Taming of the Shrew*; but it is not epoch-making. On the other hand, the Byron tragedies, assuming them to have been written before *Bussy D'Ambois*, have a peculiar value. They follow out the example set by Marlowe in his unfinished *Massacre of Paris*, and by Peele in *The Battle of Alcazar*—the representation of contemporary tragedies on the stage. The Byron plays followed at the very heels of their subject. The Duc de Biron had perished in 1602; this pair of tragedies was written, as it were, directly from the newspapers of the day, and probably appeared as early as 1605. The *Bussy D'Ambois* plays were founded upon a less recent event, which, nevertheless, would have been remembered by middle-aged men. This is one point. Closely connected with it is the fact that *Bussy D'Ambois* begins that notable series of plays which, although Kyd's much-decried *Spanish Tragedy* was their real origin, almost exclusively occupied the tragic stage from 1610 to 1640, and are known collectively as the Tragedy of Blood. *Bussy D'Ambois* is full of midnight meetings, secret vaults, unholy spectres, and bleeding ghosts; virtue is measured by the extent of misfortune; the hero is the brilliant, determined Machiavelian; and the audience is led to the brink of the abyss of sin which the dramatists saw in the European Renaissance, or rather, in its social developments. It is almost unnecessary to remark, as so many have remarked, that the Tragedy of Blood leads, through the intermediate stage of prose fiction in Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* and Mrs. Radcliffe's astonishing productions, to our own melodrama. Its literary value is, however, immeasurably greater.

Chapman's tragedies from French history.

§ 4. Very little is known of THOMAS DEKKER save his plays and his pamphlets. He seems to have been a Londoner by birth, and he has told us more of London life than any of the dramatists but Jonson. We know that he began to write plays about 1598, when his name appears in Henslowe's *Diary*, and that, in 1598, Henslowe paid forty shillings to discharge him from the Counter prison. It is also certain that, all through his life, he did hack-work as playwright and pamphleteer, and he worked so

THOMAS DEKKER (1570?–1641?).

generally in partnership with others that his own work is difficult to sift from the rest. Thus, in 1599, we find him working with Chettle at three plays, and with Chettle and Jonson at *Robert the Second, King of Scots.* In 1600 he produced, in union with Day and Haughton, *The Spanish Moor's Tragedy*; in 1603 was published *Patient Grissil*, written with Haughton and Chettle; later on, with Webster, *Westward Ho! Northward Ho!* and *Sir Thomas Wyatt*; in 1611, with Middleton, *The Roaring Girl*; in 1622, *The Virgin Martyr*, with Massinger; and, very much about the same time, *The Sun's Darling*, with Ford, and *The Witch of Edmonton*, with Ford and Rowley. These are only a few out of many. His own best plays are *The Shoemaker's Holiday* (1600); *Old Fortunatus*, which was acted before the Court in the same year; *Satiromastix*, his attack on Ben Jonson (1602); and the drama with Bellafront for its heroine, the first part of which, written with a little help, it is thought, from Middleton, came out in 1604, and was succeeded by a second part in 1630. From 1607 to 1630 he published no plays by himself alone; and for three years (1613–1616) he was, according to Oldys, in the King's Bench for debt. In 1631 he published *Match Me in London*, and in 1636, *The Wonder of a Kingdom.* Dekker was not, however, simply a maker of plays. He wrote, during his career, a very interesting series of pamphlets, in which his natural vein of irony is delightfully blent with his thorough knowledge of London. *The Seven Deadly Sins of London* (1606), *The Bellman of London* (1608), which went through several editions with several titles, and *The Gull's Hornbook* (1609), are the chief members of this unique collection. London was his city of cities. When he transferred the scenes of his plays to Milan or Babylon, he changed only the name of the place; he knew it in all its features, in its street-life, its tavern-life, even its prison-life. In 1612, 1628, and 1629, he was employed to write the civic pageant-plays of the city; and in Elizabethan literature there are few better studies of the city-life of his day than *The Shoemaker's Holiday* or *The Roaring Girl*, in the last of which he is supposed to have had the chief hand. Among his other works should be mentioned *The Four Birds of Noah's Ark*, a book of devotions published in 1609; and his odd extravaganza, which has been omitted from the number of his plays, and bears the title, *If it be not good the Devil is in it* (1612). The date of Dekker's death is unknown. His last pamphlet, *English Villainies*, belongs to 1637. It is a new edition of *Lanthorn and Candlelight*, the second part of *The Bellman of London.*

The dramatist of London.

Dekker, said Charles Lamb, "had poetry enough for anything." This criticism is borne out by every line of his unaided work. He wrote easily and simply, with a natural capacity for stringing words together in a musical order; and not only

is the mechanical part of his writing good, but also his lyric quality of phrase, which, although not so striking as that of writers like Fletcher and Ford, is, for sheer spontaneity, second only to Shakespeare's. He employs no startling effects, no triumphs of artifice. This at once distinguishes him from the poets with whom he joined from time to time. An even more admirable distinction exists in the character of his humour. In his merry moments, and in his pathetic passages, he is sincere, without any strained mirth or sentimentality. It is usual to speak of him as "tender-hearted," and in no poet is there so abundant a show of loving-kindness and sympathy; but his work is by no means delicate or fragile. Its material is robust; it can be grasped and handled. He was a realist in his methods, and his descriptions never flinch before the coarsest object; yet it would be hard to find an author the essence of whose work is so singularly pure. After Shakespeare, he is the most wholesome of the dramatists. His best play has an ugly title and a delicate subject, but Dekker's manner of dealing with his heroine is without reproach. She rises superior to her life, but she has to pay its penalty. Her father, Orlando Friscobaldo, can hardly be surpassed among those pathetic creations whose humour rings true and is spoiled by no sickly alloy. The scenes which form the comic plot of this mournful tragi-comedy are singularly amusing even after the rollicking comedy of *The Shoemaker's Holiday*. But Dekker did not by any means confine himself to the line of minute realism. One of his earlier plays, *Old Fortunatus*, is a charming romantic comedy founded on the legend of Fortunatus' wishing-cap, and is most rich with poetry. Here, too, the grace of Shakespeare's and Dekker's lyric genius is seen closely allied: Dekker is very near the rose. He was too easy-going, one may suspect, to have any liking for the solemnity of tragedy, and, while associating with writers who wrote in tears and blood, he himself added no contribution to the sanguinary catalogue of Italian tragedies, but devoted himself to plays which are humorous in the true sense of the word, founded upon the daily contrast between the gayness and sadness of life. His sense of construction is typical of the dramatist who wrote fast and had to feel the pulse of his audience before consulting his own wishes; and, like Middleton, he employed the method of relieving the serious part of his story against the background of a laughable farce, and knitting the two plots loosely together at the end of the play. This dangerous habit, which, as we shall see in other cases, is too often the cause of serious dislocation and blemish, sat more easily on Dekker than on most of his contemporaries; so that, in addition to his other virtues, we must allow him, in this particular, some discrimination and an uncommon, if hasty, ingenuity.

Claim of Dekker's work.

Characters of Bellafront and Friscobaldo.

"Old Fortunatus."

Dekker's faults.

JOHN MARSTON, vicar of Christchurch in Hampshire, occupies a prominent place among the writers of his age, but left nothing that can be said to have made its permanent mark on English literature, unless we discover his influence in the wild tirades of Nathaniel Lee's characters. He was at Coventry School and Brasenose College, Oxford, and took Holy Orders rather late in life. In his youth he wrote *Pygmalion's Image* (1598), a poem in the enervated style of *Venus and Adonis* and its somewhat cloying kind, and composed several satires, under the title of *The Scourge of Villainy* (1598), which breathe a hatred of vice and lewdness generally. One naturally looks for a comparison to Bishop Hall's satires, which, turgid and artificial as they are, are a little more sincere and moderate than these. Marston's poems were publicly burned in 1599, when the prudery of the satires went the way of the indecency of *Pygmalion's Image*. For the next few years he took to dramatic writing. Were it not for an affectation that transcends all Euphuism, a preference for the merest raving and incoherent bombast, Marston would take a very high place among the dramatists. He knew no mean, however, and chose to swathe his dramatic talent in monotony and indecency. These faults destroy his best work, the two parts of *Antonio and Mellida* (published 1602) and *The Malcontent* (published 1604); and he remains the chief example of that lack of taste which spoils so much of the work of the Elizabethan playwrights. Marston was, as we have said already, attacked by Jonson in *Cynthia's Revels*, where he is the Hedon of the piece, and in *The Poetaster*, where he appears as Crispinus. His revenge in *Satiromastix*, undertaken in company with Dekker, was inadequate, as *The Poetaster* forestalled it; but the two enemies were reconciled not long after, and we have seen that, in 1604, Marston was concerned with Jonson and Chapman in the perilous play of *Eastward Ho!* However, he seems to have fallen out with Jonson on subsequent occasions. After he had taken Orders, Marston gave up writing.

JOHN MARSTON (1575?–1634).

§ 5. The Silver Age of the English drama means the reign of the twin artists FRANCIS BEAUMONT and JOHN FLETCHER, whose work exhibits all the good and bad qualities of their period—its exquisite command of harmony in verse, its tendency to mere luxury of sound, its passage from genuine pathos to false sentiment, its defect of moral vision, and the cause of all these failings—its loss of a genuine sense of humour and of the just proportion of things. It is quite fruitless to attempt any distinction between the work of these two dramatists, although Fletcher's style, when he wrote alone, is distinct enough. One may remark, however, that Beaumont seems to have had no share in any of the comedies but one, and that the strongly tragic element in many of the plays is due to

The Silver Age of drama: BEAUMONT (1584–1616) *and* FLETCHER (1579–1625).

him, for Fletcher's undisputed work, with one or two exceptions, is comedy closely allied to farce. Beaumont, the younger of the two, was a son of Sir Francis Beaumont, Justice of the Common Pleas, and was born at his father's seat of Grace-Dieu in Leicestershire. He was entered at Broadgates Hall (now Pembroke College), in the University of Oxford, in 1597, and, coming down without taking his degree, became a member of the Inner Temple, and devoted himself to writing poetry and plays. His chief connection with the Temple was his *Masque of the Inner Temple and Gray's Inn*, which was performed before the Court in honour of the wedding of the Princess Elizabeth and the Palsgrave Frederick (1613). By this time, his literary union with Fletcher had taken place. Fletcher was some five years older than Beaumont, having been born at Rye in 1579. His father was Richard Fletcher, the courtier-prelate, who filled, in succession, the sees of Bristol, Worcester, and London, and, as Dean of Peterborough, attended Mary Queen of Scots at her execution. His family included poets, of whom we have already spoken. Giles Fletcher, the author of *Licia*, was his uncle; Phineas Fletcher, author of *The Purple Island*, and Giles Fletcher, author of *The Triumph and Victory of Christ*, were his cousins. They were, by education, a Cambridge family, and John was bred at his father's college of Corpus Christi. It was only natural that the two poets should meet as members of the same class of society; and, although their partnership was short, it was memorable. Beaumont died in 1616, at the early age of thirty. Fletcher survived him nearly ten years, working industriously and rapidly at his dramas, until he succumbed to the plague in 1625. Beaumont was buried in Westminster Abbey; Fletcher in the illustrious church of Saint Mary Overies, now the Collegiate church of Saint Saviour's, Southwark.

Life of Beaumont.

Life of Fletcher.

The very large body of work which goes under their name may be divided into tragedies, tragi-comedies, and comedies pure and simple. The obscurity which covers their lives extends to the dates of their plays, and those given should be taken as approximate rather than as definite. The tragedies are as follows: *The Maid's Tragedy* (1610–11); *Cupid's Revenge* (1612); *Thierry and Theodoret* (1616?); *The Bloody Brother* (1616–17?); *Bonduca* (1618–19); *Valentinian* (1618–19); *Sir John van Olden Barnavelt* (1619); *The Double Marriage* (1619–20); *The False One* (1620?); *The Lover's Progress* (1623?). Of these, the first three were, it is thought, equally divided between the two poets; the last seven, produced after Beaumont's early death, are chiefly Fletcher's. Massinger collaborated in *Sir John Barnavelt*. There is, at all events, no closer union imaginable between two great souls than *The Maid's Tragedy*, which is of an unusually mature excellence. The

Their Tragedies.

"The Maid's Tragedy" (1610–11).

splendid lyric declamation of which it is full, and the dramatic power of almost every other scene, are a little spoiled by the strained ingenuity and sickly moral atmosphere of the plot. A weak and irresolute young courtier, in obedience to the commands of a vicious but majestic sovereign, deserts for an unworthy bride the lady to whom he is affianced. The bride, Evadne, beneath the exhortations of her brother, a very gallant general, is converted rather suddenly from impudent glory in her shame to heroic purity, and murders the king in a manner unnecessarily brutal, while her brother revolts. Meanwhile, the deserted Aspatia, dressed as a man, challenges her false lover to a duel ; he wounds her mortally ; and the play ends in the suicide of himself and Evadne, and in the succession of Evadne's brother to the crown. We give this skeleton plot as an example, both of the construction of a play of the period, and of the entire subservience of moral feeling to sentimentality. The first is easy, and not too involved ; the second is exotic and artificial. Were it not for the exquisite gift of fluent poetry, which upholds every fault in the play, the pathos of Evadne's conversion would be intolerable, and the melancholy of the "wronged Aspatia" would be no better than the melting distress that attempts such sublimities in the post-Restoration tragic authors. But *The Maid's Tragedy* is a fine play, and stands as a noble representative of work, which, were its tone more natural and its style more masculine, might take its place beside Shakespeare's best. Moreover, *The Maid's Tragedy* does not strictly belong to the Tragedy of Blood : neither its scenery nor its spirit are of the Italian order : it has no hollow reverberations of the supernatural ; it is almost too psychological to be melodramatic. Another point about it and its companion plays is the obvious surface-fact that Beaumont and Fletcher are the dramatists of the most exclusive society ; they deal with kings and courts alone. It was this that led Coleridge into his sweeping condemnation of them as "servile *jure divino* Royalists." Although their perception of kingly divinity is often clearly phrased, and their heroes are generally devout admirers of royalty and the doctrine of passive obedience, yet the sufferings of those heroes are generally due to the vices of the kings. Either view has its opposite side. *Thierry and Theodoret* is a fine but unsatisfactory piece, in which the royal brothers are both innocent, but the queen-mother, Brunhalt, works their ruin. Brunhalt and her household form a peculiarly unpleasant feature in the play ; and Ordella, who has received an overwhelming amount of praise, seems to us to deserve it, not from any great merit in herself, but as the central figure of a very striking situation. In *Valentinian*, the motive of *The Maid's Tragedy* is employed with variations, mingled with a translation of Brunhalt and her friends into Valentinian and the ministers of his pleasures. After all, none of the tragedies is so fine in its freedom from the artificial taint as *Bonduca*. The

Their other Tragedies.

British plot, with its centre in the heroic Caratach and Hengo, the "bud of Britain," and the Roman underplot, skilfully constructed upon the mistaken jealousy of Poenius for his general, constitute a play which one naturally connects with the masterpiece composed upon an early British subject, *Cymbeline*.

The tragi-comedies are these: *Philaster, or Love Lies a-Bleeding* (1611?); *A King and No King* (1611); *The Queen of Corinth* (1618–19); *The Knight of Malta* (1618–19); *The Island Princess* (1621). If one were to choose a single play out of all the fifty-one, it would be the charming poetical drama of *Philaster*. Here, too, the sentiment is doubtless wanting, as we say, in backbone, and the whole atmosphere is too heavily charged with sorrow; but the graceful lyric covering of the piece is not, as in *The Maid's Tragedy*, a cloak for a short-sighted excess of sentiment. We take the play for what it is without wishing that it were anything else. *Philaster* seems to us the finest tragi-comic play which, if we may trust traditional dates, preceded *Winter's Tale*. On the other hand, the imaginative background of *Philaster*, a Sicilian dreamland, has a very simple pattern worked upon it, which contrasts strangely with the intricate arabesque of passion and humour woven upon the gorgeous Asiatic tissue of *A King and No King*. The main subject of this odd play is not very pleasant, indeed rather painful; and the heroine, a sententious young lady of nine years old, goes through a very fiery trial. The dramatic ruse by which the hero, King Arbaces, is allowed to escape from a hopeless difficulty is rather contemptible, and could impose upon no one. However, the under-plot, excellently attached to, or, rather, intertwined with the main story, and constructed upon the humours of Arbaces' satraps, is admirable; and the character of Captain Bessus, his big words, his amazing stories, and his paltry performances, is as well known as that of his counterpart, Bobadill, in Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour*. *The Laws of Candy* has a clever plot, which reminds us of the plots of modern comic opera; but the remaining tragi-comedies throw little additional light on Beaumont's or Fletcher's methods. Here, however, we should not forget *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, founded on the story of Palamon and Arcite, and considered by a great number of expert critics to be the joint work of Fletcher and Shakespeare. Its date is uncertain (? 1613): it was not published till 1634. We may be fairly sure that the two were collaborators in *Henry VIII*, in which the trace of Fletcher's hand is obvious; but there is a theory that Fletcher and Massinger worked in it upon Shakespeare's foundation.

Tragi-comedies.

"Philaster" (1611?).

"A King and No King" (1611).

We now come to the comedies and comedy-farces which constitute by far the larger part of the plays, and are, in all probability, almost entirely the work of Fletcher. This is the long list. The dates of production are

Comedies.

far from certain, and most of those given here must be taken as merely approximate. *The Woman-Hater* (1607); *The Scornful Lady* (? 1612); *The Coxcomb* (1612–13); *The Captain* (1613); *The Honest Man's Fortune* (1613); *Four Plays in One* (? 1613); *Wit at Several Weapons* (1614); *Wit without Money* (1614); *The Loyal Subject* (1618); *The Mad Lover* (1618–19); *The Humorous Lieutenant* (? 1619); *The Little French Lawyer* (? 1620); *Women Pleased* (about 1620); *The Wild-Goose Chase* (1621); *The Woman's Prize, or the Tamer Tamed* (? 1621); *The Pilgrim* (1621); *The Spanish Curate* (1622); *Beggar's Bush* (1622); *The Prophetess* (1622); *The Sea Voyage* (1622); *Love's Cure* (1622–3); *The Maid in the Mill* (1623); *The Night Walker* (? 1623); *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife* (1624); *A Wife for a Month* (1624); *The Nice Valour* (? 1624); *Monsieur Thomas* (? 1624–5); *The Elder Brother* (? 1625–6); *The Fair Maid of the Inn* (1626); *The Noble Gentleman* (1626); *Love's Pilgrimage* (? 1636); *The Chances*; *The Custom of the Country*; and *The Laws of Candy* (no dates). Many of these are good; as many are mediocre; two or three are bad. A few are interesting from their subject rather than from their manner. *Beggar's Bush* is invaluable to the makers of slang dictionaries, while *The Woman's Prize* is a gallant sequel to *The Taming of the Shrew*. Fletcher's comic manner is, on the whole, as fluent as his verse; and his plays bear a strong family likeness. He is probably at his best in *The Humorous Lieutenant* and *The Spanish Curate*, both of which are merry comedies with a farcical tendency, depending for their interest upon constant and ingenious intrigue. Here we strike the full note of decadence. These comedies have nothing in common with the Shakespearean comedy. That was the full, round comedy of life; this is the thin, flat comedy of intrigue. Nevertheless, Fletcher's gallants and his charming ladies are not by any means lifeless or the mere figure-heads which were afterwards the mouthpieces of Restoration comedy, but are robust enough to give the pieces a more than passing interest. A case in point is the exquisite group in *The Wild-Goose Chase*—the three fine gentlemen, Mirabel, Belleur, and Pinac, and the three witty, outspoken ladies, Oriana, Rosalura, and Lillia Bianca, are as dainty and as lifelike a picture of contemporary manners as any existing. The point of the inferiority of these comedies is not that the personages lack life, but that the ground on which their life rests is too fragile.

Fletcher and the comedy of intrigue.

The Knight of the Burning Pestle (1611) and *The Faithful Shepherdess* (1609–10) stand quite by themselves. The first is an amusing and excellent burlesque directed by a pair of well-born gentlemen (for Beaumont had a hand in it) against the military enthusiasm of the London shopkeepers. It was evidently suggested by *Don Quixote*, which had been published in 1605. The satire is delicate and good-humoured,

"Knight of the Burning Pestle" (1611) and "Faithful Shepherdess" (1609–10).

and some of the scenes are extremely funny. The cockneyism of Dekker, Middleton, and Jonson, was quite foreign to Beaumont and Fletcher; and Fletcher, for the scene of his comedies, drew chiefly upon French or Spanish life. *The Faithful Shepherdess*, which is said to be Fletcher's alone, is a very different piece of work. As a pastoral drama, its rank is second only to *Comus*, and it forms the centre of Fletcher's suave and musical lyric poetry, a nucleus round which his occasional lyrics gather—as, for example, the songs in *Valentinian*, and the masque poetry in *The Maid's Tragedy*.

§ 6. THOMAS MIDDLETON is a poet of many styles, many excellences, and many weaknesses. Details of his life are scanty. He was born in London, and it is highly probable that he is the Thomas Middleton whose entry at Gray's Inn is recorded in 1593. At any rate, his marriage with the daughter of a clerk in Chancery points to some connection with the law. In 1597 he published a paraphrase of the Wisdom of Solomon; and he is usually identified with "T. M. Gent.," author of the "six snarling satires" called *Microcynicon* (1599). Dates, with Middleton, are hard to fix; but his earliest dramatic work, between 1600 and 1607, includes the realistic comedies of *Blurt, Master-Constable* (published 1602), and *Michaelmas Term* (published 1607); the satirical comedy of *The Phœnix* (published 1607), in which the characters bear Italian epithets instead of names, like those in *Every Man out of His Humour*; and, in all probability, the rough draft of *The Mayor of Queenborough*. In 1602 he joined with Webster, Drayton, and Munday, in writing a tragedy called *Cæsar's Fall*. His most prolific period seems to have been between 1607 and 1609. *A Trick to Catch the Old One*, and *The Family of Love*, in which he laughed at the Puritans, were both published in 1608. To the same period belong *A Mad World, My Masters*, and *Your Five Gallants*. In 1611 Dekker and Middleton combined to write *The Roaring Girl*; and Middleton's partnership with Rowley may have begun about this time. In 1615 or 1616 the admirable romantic comedy, *The Widow*, was written. Their fine comedy, *A Fair Quarrel*, was published in 1617, but had been acted at Court several times before. To these add *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* (published in 1630); *No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's*; *More Dissemblers Besides Women* (both published in 1657); *Anything for a Quiet Life* (published in 1662), in all of which Middleton certainly had the greater part, if he did not write the whole. At the New Year of 1624, we stand upon firm ground of date, for it was then that *The Changeling* was acted at Whitehall on the second Sunday after Christmas. The players were the Queen of Bohemia's Company, and the only member of the royal family present was Prince Charles. The play had been acted for the first time in the previous year. In

THOMAS MIDDLETON (1570?–1627).

1624, too, the comedy, *A Game at Chess*, caused a political ferment. Its success was tremendous, and the people crowded the theatre to see a play which had the courage to attack Spain. But the ambassador Gondomar protested: the play was withdrawn; and Middleton was heavily fined, if not imprisoned. The date of the famous but not very interesting tragi-comedy of *The Witch* probably lies somewhere among these later years, but it was not published till 1778. *The Spanish Gipsy*, too, probably belongs to Middleton's great period, between 1620 and 1624. Indeed, Middleton's finest plays were not printed till after his death. Thus, *The Changeling* was put in circulation in 1653, while the first edition of *Women Beware Women* belongs to 1657. Middleton himself died at his house in Newington Butts in 1627, and was buried at Newington parish church. For the last seven years of his life he had been Chronologer of London, and was succeeded in that office by Jonson.

Excellence of Middleton's best work.

Middleton represents the Elizabethan drama in its strength and its weakness. Few men wrote with so full an appreciation of the various forms of dramatic art; few wrote so well, when they took the trouble; and few left behind so much that is obviously chaotic and feeble. His reputation has been injured by the curious preference which has been given to *The Mayor of Queenborough*, a rough, stiff drama, with a tragic plot of second-rate value, and a comic underplot of no value at all, and to *The Witch*, whose tragic part, uninteresting in itself, is overshadowed by some supernatural scenes bearing a close similarity, unfortunate for themselves, to the witch scenes in *Macbeth*. The construction of these plays is a type of all Middleton's work. In *A Fair Quarrel*, for example, the scenes between the Colonel and Captain Ager, which deserve all the praise they have obtained from Charles Lamb and others, form a plot distinct from the machinations and family intrigues of Russell; while, out of this second subject spring, not only the secret loves of Fitzalan and Jane, but the adventures of Chough and his man Trimtram in the roaring-school. Individually, these themes and variations are delectable enough; as parts of one and the same play, they are too confusing. No one sinned in this way so much as Middleton.

His realism.

As a master of realistic comedy, he is, however, the equal of Dekker; and, for the sheer amusement which he gives his reader, he is even superior. Collaboration has seldom been so successful as in *The Roaring Girl*, where both the authors knew their London so well. Among Middleton's London comedies, *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* is quite the best, although it sins against decency with a tolerant ease. The Puritans at the christening-feast are, however, not easily forgotten—no dramatist hated Puritanism so warmly as Middleton—and the goldsmith's son Tim, with his Cambridge tutor and his scraps of Latin, his arguments and his logic, shows a vigorous talent for caricature. This comedy,

whatever its faults may be, is not of the decadence. However, an earlier play, *A Trick to Catch the Old One*, has a plot and displays a cynicism which are more in the manner of the post-Restoration school than of Middleton's own day; and those charming romantic comedies, *The Widow* and *The Spanish Gipsy*, are of the fluent type that has its breath and motion in intrigue. *The Widow* has very naturally been ascribed in part to Fletcher, but its date is rather earlier than the real beginning of Fletcher's good comic work, and the theory is therefore only just possible. In these two plays the student of Fletcher will find romantic work equal to his master's at its best.

But the link which emphatically connects Middleton with this period is his solid contribution to the Tragedy of Blood. In *Women Beware Women* we have all the characteristics of that school which looked upon the social anarchy of the Latin nations during the Renaissance period with a feeling that was composed in equal parts of horrified incredulity and of irresistible fascination. The gruesome tragedy of the tale is a totally imaginary version of the story of Bianca Capello, the notorious wife, first of the Grand Duke Francesco de' Medici, and, afterwards, of his remarkable brother, Ferdinand. In Middleton's play she is not the independent lady of history, but an innocent, pleasure-loving girl, married to a poor husband, and entrapped into sin by the most diabolical means. Ferdinand, who has not had much favour from history, appears as the good angel of the piece; and Bianca, whose fall is the herald of her shamelessness, in attempting to poison him, poisons the Duke. The last act is a scene of undiluted murder. Nevertheless, the construction of the play is really very good, and the inhuman under-plots have a regular connection with the main story. Of the lady, Livia, who holds the threads of the play in her defiled hands, it can only be said that her existence could never have been imagined so strongly and so unblushingly in the best age of the English drama; but the scene in which she craftily betrays Bianca to the Grand Duke is managed with power and *finesse* enough to compensate for our natural sense of disgust. If *The Changeling* were in every respect so good a play as this, it would be the finest, if the most unpleasant tragedy, of those immediately behind *Hamlet*, *Lear*, and *Othello*. Unfortunately, it owes its title to a coarse, farcical under-plot, united with the central tragedy by the weakest of expedients—a piece of humiliation which makes us wonder at the immeasurable heights and depths of Elizabethan humour. For its plot, too, this tragedy, whose original may be found in Reynolds' *God's Revenge against Murder*, is not very noticeable. There are murders and ghosts and dumb-shows, and, at the end, enough blood is spilt to float a galleon. The marvel of the play is its psychological study of two figures, the guilty, passionate heroine, who puts one lover

His Tragedies: "Women Beware Women."

"The Changeling" (1624).

out of the way to clear the path for another, and ruins herself in the act; and her instrument, the poor gentleman-retainer with his "dog face," whose implacable devotion to her beauty is the ultimate cause of catastrophe. De Flores is a consummate portrait of that union between Spanish ferocity and Italian vice which the playwright of James I's reign had some opportunity of observing. Whatever advantage *The Duchess of Malfi* has over *The Changeling* in poetry and construction, *The Changeling* recovers in this unapproachable couple of portraits.

§ 7. *The Duchess of Malfi* has, nevertheless, a traditional and well-earned reputation, and its author, JOHN WEBSTER, whose precise dates are unknown, must always remain the acknowledged master of tragic melodrama. The presumption is that he was of an age with Fletcher, that is, that he was born between 1570 and 1580; for he does not seem to have begun working before the beginning of the seventeenth century. His earliest work probably belongs to 1602. In 1604 he undertook a revision of Marston's *Malcontent*; and we have already spoken of his collaboration with Dekker in *Westward Ho!* (1604), *Northward Ho!* (1605), and *Sir Thomas Wyatt*. His independent work, in its present state, consists of a tragi-comedy called *The Devil's Law-Case* (not later than 1619), which is not without gleams of genius, although it is dull in the main; an addition to the Elizabethan series of Roman tragedies, *Appius and Virginia*; and the two great Italian tragedies which exalt him to the very front rank of dramatists. These are *The White Devil, or Vittoria Corombona*, published in 1612, and the *The Duchess of Malfi*, acted at Blackfriars about 1616, and at the Globe in 1622, and published in 1623. The second has the greater celebrity, but there is really very little to choose between the two, either in their extravagant horror or in their poetical excellence. *The White Devil* is founded on a *cause célèbre* of some forty years before—the disastrous amours of Vittoria Accorambuoni with Paolo Giordano Orsino, Duke of Bracciano. History is, of course, garbled out of all knowledge, and a few names are changed, pointing to inaccurate information rather than design. Apart from his gift of phrase and the concentration of his plots, Webster is singularly artless. In this play, horror is heaped on horror, and the effect of so many murders excludes anything very heart-rending; indeed, the reader with a strong sense of humour may be tempted to think the play ludicrous rather than terrifying. However, putting the mere accident of slaughter out of the question, the atmosphere and style of the piece are alike so funereal that we are, as it were, imprisoned in a charnel-house of guilt. The wickedness of the *dramatis personæ*—and all who have any importance in the plot are not wicked by halves—is excessive, but not precisely incredible. Flamineo, the villainous go-between, the betrayer

JOHN WEBSTER (1580?–1625?).

"*The White Devil*" (1612).

of his sister and murderer of his brother; Brachiano, the libertine Duke, selfish and careless of the means by which he compasses his selfishness—these, to say nothing of the rest, have their analogues in Italian history. Further, no English writer has ever presented the world with so gloomy a style. Webster's high phrases blaze out of a darkness that may be felt, like candles round a coffin, lighting the black and silver of the pall, and throwing the dreary room into deeper shadow. Often unable to control his rugged and formless verse, he breaks out here and there into a line or, better still, a dirge whose solemn, spondaic regularity of movement composes the mind into a terrified attention. Thus the little Giovanni says :—

> "What do the dead do, uncle? do they eat,
> Hear music, go a hunting, and be merry,
> As we that live?
> *Fran. de' Med.* No, coz; they sleep.
> *Giov.* Lord, Lord, that I were dead!
> I have not slept these six nights.—When do they wake?
> *Fran. de' Med.* When God shall please.
> *Giov.* Good God, let her sleep ever!"

There is certainly nothing better than this in *The Duchess of Malfi*, which is not founded on fact, but on a tale by Bandello—the tale referred to by Shakespeare in *Twelfth-Night*, where he speaks of "the lady of the Strachy married the yeoman of the wardrobe." The motive is, however, less unnatural; the catastrophe falls upon undeserving innocence; and the villain, Bosola, is second only to Middleton's De Flores. The Duchess, a widow with a fortune, is married secretly to her house-steward, and her brothers employ Bosola, a pitiable rather than execrable person, to play spy upon this clandestine household. The position of the Duchess is as pathetic as any situation can well be, and, when her wretched brothers do all they can to torture her out of her wits, and finally strangle her, our pity is boundless. The sombre character of Webster's style is well maintained in *The Duchess of Malfi*, and one or two lines of the play, if not proverbial, are at least familiar. However, there is undoubtedly a great danger of forgetting the real majesty of Webster's style in contemplating his mechanism and its intricate display of lust and carnage; and, if the reader wishes to estimate the true place of this melancholy poet among his fellows, he must not dwell too nearly on the seductive absurdities of an attractively handled plot.

"The Duchess of Malfi."

§ 8. The work of CYRIL TOURNEUR precedes that of Webster in point of time. *The Revenger's Tragedy* was produced in 1607, and *The Atheist's Tragedy*, which was actually written about 1603, was published in 1611. These facts are very nearly all the material information recorded of Tourneur, of whose birth there are no facts preserved. He went as secretary to Cecil in the Cadiz expedition of 1625; but, as it returned, fell sick, was put ashore

CYRIL TOURNEUR (1575?–1626).

at Kinsale, and died in Ireland early in 1626. His earliest known work is a very curious satire, *The Transformed Metamorphosis* (1600), in which he affected a strangely unintelligible manner. His dramas, in spite of a dry and rather pedantic style, are some of the most interesting specimens of Elizabethan tragedy, and their contrast is almost necessary as a sacrifice to the genius of Webster. *The Atheist's Tragedy*, although it has a plot by no means indefinite, is, on the whole, a poor performance, and bears all the marks of a prentice hand. *The Revenger's Tragedy* is much better. In all probability the horrible story of the murder of Alessandro de' Medici by his cousin Lorenzino in 1533 furnished some hints to Tourneur. The scene is an Italian court, crowded with a plethora of rascals whose names, Lussurioso, Supervacuo, etc., indicate their characters pretty accurately. We are thrust, as it were, into a chamber of types, none of them in any degree real, all of them jerking on springs with the same flat stare. Amid these, Vindici, at once hero and villain, has something of a virtuous prominence. But, in Tourneur, we get none of Webster's sound morality. The atmosphere of the piece is close and unpleasant. Vindici, to ruin the man who has murdered his affianced bride, achieves his end by a base piece of treachery. This may be vengeance, but it is not morality; and Vindici, like his prototype, the worthless Lorenzino, is one of those self-deceivers who allow their worst passions to be mistaken for heroism. Tourneur, from time to time, gives him a complexion almost heroic; but it is astonishing that a man who spent so much of his time in moralising and staring at his dead mistress' skull should have allowed himself to entertain the suspicion that his cynical course was praiseworthy. Tourneur, with a great capacity for eloquence, wrote with a style singularly unequal. His lines run garrulously into one another, never stopping to consider the undesirability of weak endings, such as prepositions or indefinite articles; and this gives a prosaic tone to passages which might otherwise be excellent. In spite of this, there is noble poetry in *The Revenger's Tragedy*, and it bears reading more than once. The termination of the play will probably come as a surprise. Vindici's warped morality triumphs. By a number of ingenious designs, such as by poisoning the lips of his beloved skull, and by arranging a murderous masque (a device also employed in Middleton's *Women Beware Women*), he contrives to wipe out the reigning family and their party; and meanwhile his sister's virtue is secured, and his unnatural mother, by a metamorphosis found in other plays, becomes a new creature. Thus the tragedy loses half its pain, and, one may add, half its object. It is not so much a melodramatic tragedy of blood as the ordinary tragedy in which Nemesis makes her just distinctions and gives just rewards. To compare Vindici with Hamlet is not a great compliment to Hamlet; but the likeness

"The Revenger's Tragedy" (1607).

between their two tragedies is rather more than superficial, for each has his "motives and his clue for vengeance," each is in arms against the "water-flies" of the Court, and each is doubtful and meditative over his means. Each, moreover, trifles with a skull at points in the play. But the heroic dilatoriness of Hamlet is far above the lawless impatience of Vindici. There is little doubt that Tourneur had *Hamlet* in his mind in writing *The Revenger's Tragedy*, for Shakespeare's greatest tragedy could have been published not more than three years before Tourneur began his play.

§ 9. THOMAS HEYWOOD, a Lincolnshire man, and—very doubtfully—a fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge, boasted that he had a hand in two hundred and twenty plays. All his dates are merely approximate. He was an industrious playwright, and has left a solid body of independent work behind him. This includes four historical plays—the two parts of *Edward IV* (before 1600) and the two parts of *If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody, or the Troubles of Queen Elizabeth* (published in 1605 and 1606), the second of which would be more interesting if it had more dramatic unity. With these one naturally thinks of his semi-historical pieces, if one can call the absurd motive of *The Four Prentices of London* (about 1600) by such a title. In this audacious and far from thrilling comedy, Godfrey de Bouillon and his three brothers are introduced as London prentices, and start to the Crusade from their master's shop. Such startling licence is not found in *The Royal King and Loyal Subject* (published in 1637), which treats a nominally historical subject in a romantic manner. His best romantic tragedy is *The Rape of Lucrece* (1608), which is a storehouse of charming lyric poetry—a tragic opera rather than an ordinary tragedy; and this play, with so much of the appearance of a masque, is very closely allied to his allegorical dramas, *The Golden Age* (1611), *The Silver Age* (1612), *The Brazen Age* (1613), and *The Iron Age* (published 1632), which add nothing to our appreciation of the poet. Heywood also adapted Apuleius' tale of Cupid and Psyche from *The Golden Ass*—the tale which has always had so great a fascination for men of letters—in *Love's Mistress* (published in 1636). But the genuine fame of Heywood, the excellence which won the enthusiasm of Charles Lamb, rests upon his treatment of the *bourgeois* drama. With a great talent for realism of a kind, he had nothing of Dekker's or Middleton's intimate knowledge of London life, nor anything of their taste for "roaring boys" and cutpurses. No one, however, could describe a country gentleman better, or painted the manners of the knighthood and middle class of his time so exactly. The two parts of *The Fair Maid of the West* (published 1631, but acted about 1617) are a somewhat extravagant version of this kind

THOMAS HEYWOOD. (*d.* 1650?)

Heywood and the bourgeois drama.

of play, and take us, with the heroine and her lover, from Plymouth to Fowey, and so to Morocco, where we meet with a delightful person called Mullisheg, King of Fez, and so back again, through many diverting adventures. *The Fair Maid of the Exchange* (1607), gives us the story of a London lady and her love-passages with the cripple of Fenchurch Street. *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon*, *i.e.* Hoxton (1638), is another London drama, and may be bracketed with a second play, full of magic and comic mishaps, *The Late Lancashire Witches* (1634), which was produced with the aid of Richard Brome. William Rowley, Middleton's partner, joined with Heywood in *Fortune by Land and Sea* (? before 1603). We shall mention but two other plays; first, the excellent *English Traveller* (1633), and secondly, the infinitely better *A Woman Killed with Kindness* (acted 1603, published 1607), which is worthy of a place among the very best dramas of the period. Its subject is unspeakably painful, and the really tragic quality of the piece is enhanced by the vividness of its atmosphere. A north-country gentleman (perhaps from the northern part of Heywood's native Lincolnshire) marries a young and beautiful wife. Frankford himself is the most amiable of all creatures, and, struck with sudden fancy and compassion for a poor gentleman named Wendoll, invites him to share his hospitality, and supplies him with gifts and money. Wendoll, whose excellent intentions, ruined by his want of self-control, are one of the best points in the play, takes advantage of his friend's generosity with the basest ingratitude. Frankford discovers the treachery; Wendoll escapes; and, after a terrible scene, in which Mrs. Frankford implores forgiveness, Frankford banishes her, with a mild sternness, to his manor, seven miles away. She goes there, to die of shame and contrition. All this is told with the most extraordinary simplicity and pathos; the prosaic character of Heywood's style only adds to the reality of the story. Wendoll, however, instead of meeting with condign vengeance, is allowed to go off the stage, recounting a scheme for cultured travel which will occupy him till the storm has blown over, and he is able to return and make his mark at Court. Whether he did this on the remains of Frankford's bounty, or on some hitherto unsuspected fortune, we are not told; his departure leaves us without regret for him. The centre of the play is the tender patience and mildness of Frankford, his ability to look facts in the face and meet them with judgment. This, in coarser hands, would have been satirised as a contemptible quality. But Heywood, who wrote so much that was ephemeral, here rose above his ordinary manner, and painted a portrait imperatively demanding our respect and pity. *A Woman Killed with Kindness* stands side by side with *Arden of Feversham* at the culminating point of English domestic tragedy.

"A Woman Killed with Kindness" (1603).

§ 10. With the celebrated name of PHILIP MASSINGER we come to the last stage of the classical English drama. Massinger was born at Salisbury, and was the son of a gentleman who occupied some position of trust in Lord Pembroke's household at Wilton. He was at St. Alban's Hall, Oxford, from 1602 to 1606, but left without taking a degree—it is supposed, owing to his conversion to the Roman communion, and to the consequent loss of his Protestant friends' patronage. There is, however, no precise statement to this effect, but it is a plausible explanation of a circumstance which seems to want elucidating, and is certainly suggested by the internal evidence of the plays themselves. He probably began writing for the stage soon after his departure from Oxford. He worked in many of Fletcher's plays, and the collaboration had a lasting effect on his style. Dekker, too, is supposed to have written the comic scenes of *The Virgin Martyr* (? 1620), while *The Old Law* is attributed to Middleton, Dekker, and Rowley. At any rate, the critics are usually agreed in assigning *The Duke of Milan*, *The Unnatural Combat*, and *The Fatal Dowry* (the last written with Nathaniel Field), to the period before the appearance of *The Woman's Plot* (1621–2). This may have been the first draft of the play afterwards called *A Very Woman* (1634). About this time Massinger was at his best. The death of the usurer, Sir Giles Mompesson, in 1620, furnished him with a satiric text for his comedy, *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* (? 1625–6), which, it has been remarked, is, in point of plot, closely connected with Middleton's *Trick to Catch the Old One*. A number of plays follow, all of very equal merit. *The Bondman* (1623–4), *The Renegado* (1624), *The Emperor of the East* (1631), and that bewildering comedy, *The Picture* (1629), whose unusual scene is Hungary, may all be attributed to the period of Massinger's greatest facility. *The Roman Actor* was produced in 1626; *The Great Duke of Florence*, in 1627; *The Maid of Honour* has been assigned, among other dates, to 1628; *Believe as You List*, in 1631; *The City Madam*, in 1632; and *The Guardian*, in 1633. A great many of Massinger's plays have perished through the industry of John Warburton's cook, who burned their leaves to make covers for pie-crust; but none of the titles which remain sound very interesting, except, perhaps, *The Spanish Viceroy* (1624). Many, too, have extremely corrupt texts, and *The Parliament of Love* (1624), owing to this, remains a not very stimulating fragment. Massinger died suddenly, one morning in 1640, at his house on the Bankside, and was buried in St. Mary Overies—according to one account—in the same grave with Fletcher. Since the rebuilding of the nave of that ancient church, the Collegiate Chapter have honoured the dramatists buried within its walls with a series of memorial windows by Mr. C. E. Kempe. Some such tribute is appropriate to a company of writers whom Londoners have, for the most part, probably forgotten.

The decadence: PHILIP MASSINGER (1583–1640).

Massinger is the dramatist most completely representative of the Elizabethan stage in its decline. The change which had come over the soul of the drama is typified more strikingly by Ford's more individual genius; but in Massinger we see its body, soul, and spirit alike in a state of metamorphosis. Massinger has a great name among the dramatists; his reputation is almost equal to that of Beaumont and Fletcher. He worked much in partnership with Fletcher, and, in that conjunction, assimilated Fletcher's style with a singular readiness. But we must expect to find Fletcher's excellences a little dimmed in Massinger's verse. Just as Fletcher himself modelled his style on the splendid examples of poetry with which Shakespeare closed his career; just as his copy, easy and fluent, failed to reflect the glories of the original, so Massinger imitated Fletcher readily enough, but failed to transfer to his own work the brilliancy and gaiety of his exemplar. It is impossible to praise the mechanism of Massinger's style too highly. His fluency and eloquence are unsurpassed; he seems to think in the melodious verse that comes so readily from his pen. Yet of the higher kind of poetry, of the passionate and graceful fancy that, wherever we turn, illuminates Fletcher's plays, he had little; and of that lyric faculty by virtue of which Fletcher stands among the first of Elizabethan poets, he had none. His verse is a little too facile; its tendency to monotony is too obvious. And his style is the outward symbol of everything else about him. Of all the dramatists, he deserves, next to Shakespeare, that epithet of the "best plotter" which Meres gave to Anthony Munday in 1598. His hand is competent to hold the threads of those intricate stories which Fletcher held so carelessly. *The Great Duke of Florence* is a model of plot; *The Duke of Milan*, improbable as it is, is a romantic tragedy well told. But over all his plays presides the artificiality of decadence. Of his austerity of mind, his sincere religion, his high ideals, there is ample proof everywhere; but we arrive at this conclusion by inference, not by direct intelligence. Whether it is the tendency of the drama in his day, or some fault in his own point of view that is to blame, is hard to settle; it is possible that these causes reacted mutually one on the other. It is certain, however, that the scenes in which we catch a glimpse of his nobler qualities are often impeded by false pathos; that their atmosphere is tainted by that morbid analysis of passion which is so characteristic of a decline in imaginative work, and is exhibited in its sinister perfection by Ford. To blame him for the gross faults of comic scenes which, in all probability, were not written by him, is to mistake the temper of his age. His own cast of mind was serious; he had little sense of humour; and the virtue of his chief comedies—*The City Madam* above all the rest—lies in that satiric energy

Characteristics of Massinger's work.

His style.

Treatment of plot.

Weakness of his work.

which is quite compatible with an unhumorous disposition. To pronounce judgment on such a writer, so far above the moral vices, yet so amenable to the literary faults of his age, is abnormally difficult; and the greatest critics of Elizabethan drama have withheld or qualified their sentence. It is enough to say that in Massinger's work, so much of it written in the reign of Charles I, and amid the general decay of Elizabethan vitality, the light which shines from every page of Shakespeare still burns, with a feeble gleam, indeed, but with something of its old purity.

§ 11. When the forgotten dramatists were revived in the first half of the nineteenth century, special attention was given to JOHN FORD, and, since then, he has never been without his admirers. He was born at Ilsington, on the south-eastern slopes of Dartmoor, and entered the Middle Temple in 1602. His first play was a comedy, called *An Ill Beginning has a Good End* (1613); and it is known that during these years he worked with other dramatists. Part of *The Witch of Edmonton* is due to him; and it would be interesting to see the play he wrote in partnership with Webster, bearing the grisly title of *A Late Murder of the Son upon the Mother* (1624). All his comedies have, perhaps fortunately, perished, owing to the good offices of Warburton's cook, and, with the exception of *The Sun's Darling*, a masque written with Dekker (1624), the first piece of Ford's that we possess is *The Lover's Melancholy* (1628). In 1633 were published the three great plays on which his reputation rests, the terrible tragedy of Giovanni and Annabella, *The Broken Heart*, and *Love's Sacrifice*. *Perkin Warbeck* belongs to 1634, and two very slight pieces, *The Fancies, Chaste and Noble*, and *The Lady's Trial*, to 1638. At this point Ford vanishes into private life, and nothing more is heard of him.

JOHN FORD (*born* 1586).

Ford was a great poet, and his tragic power is undeniable. He is Webster's only rival in the peculiar kind of tragedy which they both affected; but his style has nothing of Webster's roughness and rude strength, nor do his phrases strike us with so convincing a force. No reader, however casual, can fail to detect Webster's curious, sudden gift of phrase—the articulate sentence which now and then comes in between stammerings. On the other hand, the reader whose ear is not keen to the manifold variety of sound may skim over Ford's easy lines and condemn him as another Massinger. Ford never stammered, but his fluency was not the mechanical ease of Massinger. As a dramatist Massinger is the better of the two; but Ford is the greater poet. Of all the phalanx of dramatists, he alone is the perfect artist in words. Looking through *The Lover's Melancholy*, which, as a play, is indescribably weak, it is hard to find an imperfect line. The use of hendecasyllabic lines, which, with Fletcher and Massinger,

Comparison of Ford with Webster and Massinger.

Artistic element in Ford's work.

leads to a dreadful monotony, is carefully restrained; where an extra foot occurs in the line, it does not break the rhythm, but varies it. There is no doubt that the structure is artificial, but the result is exquisite. The autumnal character of his style is more than symbolical of everything else about him. He comes at the very end of the procession of dramatists. The energies of the drama were well-nigh exhausted, and, as the quiet autumn afternoon decayed into winter, the whole scene was suddenly lit up into a sad blaze of gold by Ford's melancholy genius. Ford's mind was coloured with an unhealthy tinge; he was not precisely in love with the artificial, but he was persistently enamoured of the unnatural. This curious moral twist is far more characteristic of decadence than any mere theatrical and unreal love of effect. Ford is, we have said, abnormally characteristic of one side of his period. In his choice and treatment of subject, his judgment always seems warped. His most famous tragedy is founded upon a very horrible and disagreeable theme. Ford, however, seems to have thought it quite the reverse, and beckons to us to mourn over the loves of Giovanni and Annabella as though they were Romeo and Juliet. To compare this tale with any similar tragedy—*The Duchess of Malfi* or *Women Beware Women*, for example—is to realise the morality of Webster and Middleton, and their indignation at wrong. Ford condones wrong which Webster would have shuddered at. One may suspect that he himself had no very acute sense of the distinction between good and evil, and that he chose the least pleasant manifestations of passion for the sake of a curious delight in studying their anatomy. His plays are, in the very first place, thoughtful and suggestive; his poetry has a meditative air of self-communion; his action is never hurried, nor do we follow it with breathless interest. His aim is to plunge us, by the use of extraordinary artifice, deeper and deeper into a gulf of sorrow, and his success, with any moderately impressionable reader, is marvellous. However, once or twice he has overshot the mark. The famous scene in *The Broken Heart*, in which Calantha, amid reiterated tidings of death, preserves her gaiety at the dance, spoils a play that would otherwise be excellent. A writer of this stamp, devoted to the abnormal, can hardly be expected to give reality to his distorted creations. And, in the end, it cannot be said that we see Ford's personages clearly—they are dim figures shadowed through a vague mist of graceful poetry, something we seem, in his own words, to "remember a great while since, a long, long time ago."

Its unhealthiness.

§ 12. The last and youngest of the great dramatists was a versatile person whose position in literature is more important than his actual plays. JAMES SHIRLEY was born in the City of London, and was educated at Merchant Taylors' School, from which he proceeded to St. John's College, Oxford. Laud, who was then

JAMES SHIRLEY (1596–1666).

Master, objected to Shirley's intention of taking Orders, owing to the presence of a mole on the poet's left cheek. It may have been this which sent Shirley from Oxford to Cambridge, where he spent some time at Catharine Hall, and, having taken his degree, entered into Holy Orders. In 1623 he became master at St. Albans Grammar School, and apparently held a living near the town, which, after his conversion to the Roman faith a little later, he resigned. His schoolmaster days ended about 1625, when he had commenced as dramatist. Already, in 1618, he had published his *Echo, or the Infortunate Lovers*, probably the first version of the poem eventually known as *Narcissus* (1646), a venture in that soft and luxurious manner which most of the dramatists cultivated in their youth. But his first comedy, *The School of Compliment*, did not appear until 1625, when it was known as *Love Tricks with Compliments*. In 1626 he followed this up with a pair of plays—*The Maid's Revenge* and *The Brothers*—the first of which was a gentle essay in the Tragedy of Blood, the second a comedy. His next important play is a comedy, acted in 1628, *The Witty Fair One*. For the next few years his pen was occupied with play after play. In 1629 we have *The Grateful Servant*; in 1631 *The Traitor*, a tragedy borrowed loosely from the story of Lorenzino de' Medici, and reminding us of Tourneur's famous adaptation of the same tale. In 1632 he produced *The Changes, or Love in a Maze*, the excellent comedy of *Hyde Park*, and *The Ball*, in which he was aided, as we have mentioned before, by the veteran George Chapman. From 1633 to 1635 he was very productive. To the last year belong *The Tragedy of Chabot, Admiral of France*, in which Shirley and Chapman again worked together; and one of his best comedies, *The Lady of Pleasure*. It is known that, somewhere about this time, Shirley went over to Ireland and wrote for Ogilby's theatre in Dublin. This, Mr. Gosse thinks, was from 1636 to 1640; and, during this interval, he brought out, or at least wrote, *The Royal Master*; *The Doubtful Heir*; *The Constant Maid*; and the curious extravaganza called *St. Patrick for Ireland*. In 1640 he returned to England, and wrote as untiringly as ever. Among his last works we need mention only *The Cardinal*, in which Shirley made use of *The Duchess of Malfi*, just as, in *The Traitor*, he had made use of *The Revenger's Tragedy*. But, in 1642, with the closing of the play-houses, Shirley's occupation went; and, during the Great Rebellion, we have it on Anthony Wood's authority that, after Marston Moor, he went abroad with his patron, the Earl of Newcastle, to whom he had dedicated *The Traitor*. A year or two later, he came back quietly to England, and again became a schoolmaster in Whitefriars. He lived till 1666, but wrote no more plays, his only publication being his *Poems* of 1646. At the Restoration his plays were produced again, but the taste of the time had altered, and his style was obsolete. The Great

Fire of 1666 caused his death. He and his wife (he was married twice) had to leave their house in Fleet Street and escape from the flames to some place of refuge in St. Giles', where they both died on the same day of pure fright and the cold October air. They were buried, like Chapman, in St. Giles' churchyard.

Characteristics of Shirley.

Shirley's work is never quite first-rate; on the other hand, he is always readable. It is usual to cite him, because he lived and wrote later than any of the other dramatists, as the regular example of the decadence. But he is really less decadent than either Ford or Massinger: he makes less demand on the artificial emotions than Massinger: the morality of his plays is not their strongest point, but it is not the twisted, unnatural plant which Ford cultivates so assiduously. He does not endeavour to paint black white, but leaves the question of black and white for the most part alone. At first sight, the reader of his best tragedy, *The Traitor*, or his best comedy, *The Lady of Pleasure*, putting aside any question of date, is inclined to recognise in them the admirable work of a dramatist writing somewhat in the manner of Beaumont and Fletcher, but with half their force. In fact, the link which connects Shirley with the decadence is not any obvious tendency to artificial methods, but a weakness and a slight inability to achieve the natural. If we reckon *The Traitor* and *The Cardinal* as Tragedies of Blood, we must confess that they are very mild attempts; we read them comfortably, without horror or tears, or any undue emotion, Of the comedies, it may be said that they are very charming reading, and leave an impression of excellent dialogue and thoroughly spontaneous poetry. But, although they contain many beautiful ladies, these tender and fragile portraits combine in the memory into one delicate type which stands for all: we may discriminate by names, but not by character. This fixes Shirley's position. In style he may and does approximate to Fletcher; in his method of portraiture he brings us to the age of Congreve. His Violetta and Celestina stand before us, not with the clearness of Fletcher's Rosalura and Lillia Bianca, but with the dim prominence of Vanbrugh's Amanda and Congreve's Angelica—we do not say Millamant, for Millamant is something better than this. In a word, Shirley, with the poetry of the old romantic comedy, stands upon the threshold of the comedy of manners.

Transitional character of his work.

It is by his comedy that Shirley is to be judged, not by his tragedy, whose methods are simply ancient traditions in an exhausted state. But we are likely to remember him more gratefully as a lyric poet. He was a favourite at Court, and his plays and numerous masques were often performed before Charles I. His masques are full of exquisite lyrics, and it is not too much to say that, among the dramatists, he stands as a lyric poet not much below

His lyric poetry.

Shakespeare, beside Jonson, and a little above Heywood and Fletcher. Everyone knows "The glories of our blood and state," which, for sheer lyric enthusiasm, for the marshalling and movement of solemn words in regular order, and for a certain graceful austerity and self-control, is in the forefront of English poems of the kind. If one is sometimes tempted to accuse Shirley of frigidity and the less execrable mannerisms of the Restoration period, this poem and others—"Victorious men of earth," for instance—rise up to witness against us. In Shirley the Elizabethan drama died hard, succumbing to external circumstances rather than to any sudden decay of talent. The decay was there, and some startling examples of it are included in the following Notes and Illustrations; but, presiding over the destinies of the theatre, arresting its glory from utter extinction, were men not wholly unworthy of the mantle of Shakespeare. Were our drama of the great period represented by these alone, we should still turn from Wycherley, Otway, Congreve, and even Dryden, to praise the genius of the preceding age, and lament its extinction.

Superiority of the Elizabethan dramatists to their successor

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

The dramatists of the Elizabethan age are almost innumerable; and, in addition to the plays of known authorship, there are a great number which can be attributed to nobody in particular. We have already treated in detail the work of those playwrights, from Marlowe to Shirley, who have left their names firmly printed in the history of English literature; and now it remains to notice briefly some other members of this great company in their alphabetical order.

RICHARD BROME (d. 1652?) belonged, during his later years, to the group of poets and wits known as "the Tribe of Ben," which found its polestar in Ben Jonson. Brome had been Jonson's servant, and remained devotedly attached to him. Ten plays by Brome, all comedies of different kinds, were published in 1653 and 1659 by a certain Alexander Brome, who may or may not have been a relation. These, with five more, formed the reprint of his works in 1873. Brome's chief successes are his semi-farcical plays, *The Northern Lass* and *A Jovial Crew*; but, as a dramatist, he is the type of a respectable mediocrity. His idea of comedy, and that of his friends, show how Fletcher's brilliant comedy of intrigue altered the standard of all such dramatic work, and prepared for the transition, through Shirley, to the Restoration comedy of manners.

WILLIAM CARTWRIGHT (1611–1643), student of Christ Church and Precentor of Salisbury, was another of the Tribe of Ben, and his work was highly esteemed by Jonson. His chief comedy is *The Ordinary*.

HENRY CHETTLE (d. 1607?) belongs to an earlier period. He was an industrious publisher and mis-

cellaneous writer. Payne Collier was of opinion that he wrote for the stage before 1592—it was in 1592 that, as Greene's literary executor, he apologised to Shakespeare for the attack made on him in *Greene's Groatsworth of Wit* (see above, Ch. VI.) Of his thirteen known plays only one, *The Tragedy of Hoffman*, was published (1631). He collaborated a great deal with Dekker, and, with him and Haughton, produced *Patient Grissil* in 1603. We read in Henslowe's *Diary* that the partners received, "in earnest of" this play, "the summe of 3li of good and lawfull money."

SIR ASTON COKAYNE (1608–1684), a Derbyshire knight, was merely a *littérateur*, who lived in the society of authors, and wrote comedies in distant imitation of Fletcher, the best of which was an adaptation from the Italian play called *Trappolin Creduto Principe*. It was afterwards known by the English name of *A Duke and No Duke*.

JOHN COOKE, an actor, produced a play called *Greene's Tu Quoque, or the City Gallant*, in 1614. He was also the author of fifty epigrams (1604).

SIR WILLIAM D'AVENANT (1606–1668) wrote a great number of plays, mostly in the tragic vein, of which *Albovine* (1629) and *The Cruel Brother* (1630) are the most famous. We shall speak of D'Avenant again further on; he is one of those dramatists who stand on the brink of the Restoration period; and no one so actively promoted the revival of the drama after Puritan days.

ROBERT DAVENPORT wrote among other works, a Fletcherian comedy of the usual type called *The City Nightcap* (1624); and, in *King John and Matilda*, combined history with romance.

JOHN DAY, who appears to have been a member of Caius College, Cambridge, worked much on old plays and at the joint business of furnishing new ones with the indefatigable Dekker and Chettle. He wrote, however, some charming pieces of his own, showing a great deal of wit and light fancy. His *Humour Out of Breath* (licensed and published 1608), and his *Parliament of Bees*, rather a masque than a play (earliest extant edition, 1641), represent the best of his work. *The Parliament of Bees* has chiefly inspired Mr. Swinburne's beautiful poem to Day in the *Sonnets to the Elizabethan Dramatists*.

NATHANIEL FIELD (1587–1633) was an actor-playwright, and took a leading part in the presentation of several of the best Elizabethan plays—notably Jonson's. His own original work consists of two amusing comedies, *A Woman is a Weathercock* and *Amends for Ladies*, both acted before 1610. The second, as the titles show, is a recantation of the first. Field wrote part of Massinger's *Fatal Dowry*.

HENRY GLAPTHORNE wrote five extant plays, which are something a little less than mediocre. He belongs to the Massinger and Shirley period of the drama, and, in addition to some comedies which clearly show the prevailing influence of the age, published a tragedy dealing with contemporary history and called *Albertus Wallenstein* (1639).

SIR FULKE GREVILLE, LORD BROOKE (1554–1628), was at Shrewsbury School with Sidney, and afterwards at Jesus College, Cambridge. In discussing the sonneteers, we have already mentioned his *Cælica*. He was also the author of the *Life of Sidney* (1652). His two Senecan dramas, *Mustapha* (1609) and *Alaham* (1633), from which Lamb selected in his *Specimens*, are obviously unfit for the stage, but stand well as examples of rhetorical tragedy. He was Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1614, and was, in his old age, stabbed by a servant whom he had neglected in his will.

WILLIAM HAUGHTON, author of *A Woman will have her Will* (1598), was a member of the Dekker-Chettle confederacy, which supplied Henslowe of the Rose and Fortune Theatres with plays (see *ante*).

SHACKERLEY MARMION (d. 1639) was of the Tribe of Ben and followed the comedy of intrigue. We have only three plays of his, and a short poem, called *Cupid and Psyche* (1637).

ANTHONY MUNDAY (1553–1633) was said by Meres in his *Palladis Tamia* (1598) to be the "best plotter" among the comic poets; which might easily have been true at that early date. Fourteen plays were written either partly or wholly by him. The first of importance was *Valentine and Orson*, published in 1598, but acted much earlier. He was assisted by Drayton, Hathway, and Robert Wilson, it is said, in *Sir John Oldcastle*, which was published in 1600, and ascribed by the printer to Shakespeare (see *ante*, Ch. VII. Note C). In 1601 Munday published *Robert Earl of Huntingdon's Downfall*, and, assisted by Chettle, *Robert Earl of Huntingdon's Death*. His writings extended over the period 1580–1621. Perhaps his chief claim to consideration rests on his painstaking translations of chivalrous romances, *e.g. Palmerin d'Oliva* (1588) and *Amadis de Gaul* (1595). He died August 10, 1633, and is styled on his monument in St. Stephen's, Coleman Street, "citizen and draper of London."

THOMAS NABBES was one of the members of the Tribe of Ben, and wrote a few fluent but insignificant masques and comedies — *Covent Garden* (1633), *Tottenham Court* (1633), *Microcosmus* (1637), and *The Bride* (1638). The first two names remind us of Shirley's *Hyde Park*, and give us the key to the spirit of the pieces. He wrote also a continuation (1638) of Knolles' *History of the Turks*. Little is known of him save that he was secretary to some nobleman near Worcester.

HENRY PORTER is known, from Henslowe's *Diary*, to have worked in partnership with Chettle and Jonson at a play called *Hot Anger soon Cold* (1598), and to have written the charming comedy of *The Two Angry Women of Abington* (1599).

THOMAS RANDOLPH (1605–1635), of the Tribe of Ben, was born near Daventry and educated at Westminster, and became a fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. He was a poet, a scholar, and a gentleman, and his pieces still bear witness to his learning. His chief plays are *The Muses' Looking-glass* (published 1638) and *The Jealous Lovers* (published 1632); and in all his work he drew freely from Plautus, Terence, and Aristophanes. He died of smallpox at the early age of twenty-nine.

SAMUEL ROWLEY, the probable author of *The Noble Spanish Soldier* (1631), deserves mention, but chiefly in order to distinguish him from WILLIAM ROWLEY (1585?–1642?), the very powerful and unequal dramatist whose hand is to be seen in Middleton's *Changeling* and *A Fair Quarrel*. Rowley's tragedy, *All's Lost by Lust*, points to a very distinct tragic power, and gives considerable reason for the favourable attitude which recent criticism, in revising its opinion of Middleton, has taken towards him as well. However, he did much strong, coarse work in farcical comedy, and the very unhumorous comic scenes in Shakespeare's *Pericles*, that work of several authors, are supposed by some critics to be his. Samuel Rowley certainly wrote *When you see me, you know me, or the History of Henry VIII* (published 1605).

SIR JOHN SUCKLING (1609–1642), of whom more in the next chapter, wrote three rather dull tragedies called *Aglaura*, *Brennoralt*, and the unfinished *Sad One*, and a comedy called *The Goblins* (1638). Suckling's writing is frigid, and its tone is post-Restoration rather than Elizabethan. His plays form part of his posthumous *Fragmenta Aurea* (1646); but *The Sad One* did not appear in print till 1658.

ROBERT TAYLOR, an early dramatist, wrote a play called *The Hog hath lost his Pearl*, which is familiar to most readers from the admirable specimen cited by Charles Lamb.

JOHN WILSON (1627? – 1696) brought out, in post-Restoration times, two noteworthy comedies, *The Cheats* (1664) and *The Projectors* (1665), and two other plays, in avowed imitation of Ben Jonson. His work, late as it is in date, is very excellent of its kind, and one is tempted to regret that the Elizabethan spirit—of which a gleam is seen in Nathaniel Lee—did not

revive more successfully, instead of succumbing to French dramatic fashions.

In addition to these writers should be mentioned the anonymous author of *Nero*, published in 1624 and 1633, one of the best of the classical tragedies of the era, after Shakespeare's, and possessing more liveliness and spirit than Ben Jonson's Roman plays, with a certain degree, at the same time, of rhetorical stateliness. *Nero* has been edited once or twice of recent years (by Mr. A. H. Bullen, and in the "Mermaid" series by Mr. H. P. Horne), but the author's name has never been satisfactorily conjectured.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CAROLINE POETS.

§ 1. The so-called *metaphysical* poetry; its characteristics. § 2. GEORGE WITHER and FRANCIS QUARLES. § 3. GEORGE HERBERT and RICHARD CRASHAW. § 4. THOMAS CAREW, ROBERT HERRICK, SIR JOHN SUCKLING and RICHARD LOVELACE. § 5. WILLIAM BROWNE and WILLIAM HABINGTON. § 6. EDMUND WALLER. § 7. SIR WILLIAM D'AVENANT and SIR JOHN DENHAM. § 8. ABRAHAM COWLEY.

Poetry of the seventeenth century.

§ 1. THE seventeenth century is one of the most momentous epochs in English history. A large portion of it is occupied by an immense political and religious fermentation, out of which came many of those institutions to which the country owes its present grandeur and happiness. In its literary aspect this agitated epoch, although not marked by that marvellous outburst of creative power which dazzled us in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I, has nevertheless left obvious traces on the turn of thought and expression of the English people; and in poetry alone, excluding the solitary example of Milton as a poet of the first order, we may say that this period produced a class of admirable writers in whom intellect and fancy were more powerful than sentiment or passion. In these poets, whom Johnson called the metaphysical class, ingenuity predominates over feeling, and, while Milton owed much to many of them, they had nevertheless far more to do in generating the so-called correct and artificial manner of the age of William III, Anne, and George I. We propose to pass in rapid review, and generally according to chronological order, the most distinguished names among these poets from 1640 to 1700.

GEORGE WITHER (1588–1667).

§ 2. GEORGE WITHER and FRANCIS QUARLES are a pair of poets, typical, in some ways, of the best and worst work of this era. Wither was born at Bentworth, near Alresford, and was educated at Magdalen College, Oxford. His family were not very well off, and, after leaving college, he had to take up farming. Subsequently, he entered at Lincoln's Inn; and, during the Civil War, changed sides from Royalist to Roundhead. At the Restora-

tion, he had to undergo severe persecution and a long imprisonment, which seem to have been no more than he deserved. His most important works are the collection of semi-pastoral poems called *The Shepherd's Hunting* (1615), and the fanciful narrative of *The Mistress of Philarete* (1622); but, in addition to these, he wrote a great deal of religious poetry—in 1623, the fine *Hymns and Songs of the Church*, and, in 1641, a collection called *Hallelujah*—while almost his earliest work was a satire, *Abuses Stript and Whipt* (1613). His rural descriptions show an exquisite sense of beauty, and his moral tone is sweet and pure without being brought obtrusively into notice. His vice, in common with most of his contemporaries, was a passion for ingenious turns of phrase and unexpected conceits, which bear the same relation to really beautiful thoughts that plays upon words bear to wit. He was also often singularly deficient in taste: his lyric utterance fails, and he deforms graceful images by placing them side by side with what is merely quaint and sometimes even ignoble. Many of his detached lyrics are extremely beautiful, and his verse is generally flowing and melodious; but, in reading his best passages, we always feel a nervous apprehension that we shall come, at any moment, upon something that will jar upon our sympathy. Among other works, he wrote a series of *Emblems*, in which his puritanical enthusiasm revels in a system of moral and theological analogies as far-fetched as poetical.

Defects of Wither's poetry.

Quarles, a Royalist as ardent as Wither was a devoted Republican, exhibits many points of intellectual resemblance to Wither, but was far his inferior in poetical sentiment. He was born at Romford and educated at Christ's College, Cambridge, and, having filled the offices of cup-bearer to Elizabeth of Bohemia, the "Queen of Hearts," of secretary to Archbishop Ussher, and of Chronologer to the City of London, died in 1644, leaving his fortune much impaired by his fidelity to the King's cause. He wrote an immense amount; but his best-known work, which has enjoyed a considerable degree of popularity, is the collection of *Divine Emblems* (1635). In these verses he inculcated moral and religious principles in a style quaint and conceited beyond endurance. He illustrated them also with engravings which show the tendency to pictorial allegory run mad. For example, the text, "Who will deliver me from the body of this death?" is accompanied by a cut representing a diminutive human figure, typical of the human soul, peeping through the ribs of a skeleton as from behind the bars of a dungeon. This taste for extravagant, yet prosaic, allegory, was borrowed from the laborious ingenuity of the Dutch and Flemish moralists and divines. Quarles, indeed, borrowed the last three books of the *Emblems*, with their illustrations, from the *Pia*

FRANCIS QUARLES (1592–1644).

Superfluous quaintness of his verse.

Desideria Emblematis (1624) of Hermann Hugo, a Jesuit divine. However, in spite of his quaintness, Quarles is not destitute of the feeling of a true poet, and many of his pieces breathe an intense spirit of religious fervour. Towards the end of his life he published a book of pious aphorisms called *Enchiridion* (1640), which is so full of beauty and religious aspiration that it deserves a place higher than any of his poems. There is a shade of unfairness in mentioning Wither and this distinctly inferior contemporary in the same breath ; but, speaking roughly, Quarles may be said to have been, in spirit, the most Roundhead of the Cavaliers, and Wither the most Cavalier of the Roundheads.

§ 3. A far more reasonable comparison, without doubt, exists between GEORGE HERBERT, the most devout of Anglican writers, and RICHARD CRASHAW, one of the most illustrious Englishmen who have devoted their talents to the service of the Roman faith. Herbert was born at Montgomery Castle ; and, at Trinity College, Cambridge, showed himself both courtier and scholar, and filled the office of public orator in the University. His name is chiefly connected, however, with his life as parish priest of Bemerton, near Salisbury, where he showed himself a living example of the virtue and piety he recommended in his treatise, *A Priest to the Temple*. He was attached to those great ideals of Churchmanship which excited so strongly the devotion of his age; and he occupies, side by side with Lancelot Andrewes and Thomas Ken, the highest place in the English calendar of post-Reformation saints. His principal, and, indeed, with the exception of *A Priest to the Temple*, now his sole remembered work, was *The Temple Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations*, published in 1633, very shortly after his death. These poems are mainly short lyrics, full of pious aspiration and admirable pictures of nature. They are not devoid of the strange and perverted ingenuity which disfigures Quarles' and Wither's work ; but the wonderful piety which reigns throughout them serves as an antidote to the poison of perpetual conceits. In his most successful pieces he has almost attained the perfection of devotional poetry : they glow with the ardent fervour of devotion, and are yet free from that sentimentalism into which religious poets are too often apt to fall. He died before the troubles of the Civil War; and his prose treatise, *A Priest to the Temple*, was not brought out until 1652.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633).

"*The Temple*" (1633).

Crashaw's short life was passed in a perpetual glow of religious enthusiasm. His father was William Crashaw, preacher at the Inner Temple and prebendary in Ripon and York Minsters, a scholar and poet, but a theologian of the Puritan type, whose Protestant prejudice probably was unbending enough to direct his son in quite the opposite line. The young Crashaw went to Charter-

RICHARD CRASHAW (1613?–1649).

house and Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, and, in 1637, obtained a fellowship at Peterhouse. At Cambridge his sympathies were very strongly attracted by the saintly character of the High Church party, and in particular by the famous Nicholas Ferrar, whose religious house at Little Gidding formed a rendezvous for spiritually-minded Cambridge men. However, during the troubles of the Civil War and the temporary overclouding of Anglican prospects, he joined the Roman communion, carrying to its service a singularly sensitive mind, considerable learning, and a gentle but intense devotional mysticism. He was a passionate lover of music, very proficient in languages, and possessed among his contemporaries a high reputation for ability. The mystical bent of his mind was increased by his misfortunes and his change of religion; and in his later works we find the heat of his pietism reaching a pitch little short of extravagance. He went to Rome about 1648, joined the household of Cardinal Palotta, and was appointed a sub-canon of Loreto. He died within four months of his appointment. While still an Anglican, he had been an ardent admirer of the writings of St. Teresa, and had written his first hymn to the great Spanish mystic, which, after he had left the Anglican communion, was succeeded by the splendid *Flaming Heart*; and that union of the sensuous fervour of human affection with the wildest flights of religious ecstasy which we see in St. Teresa is faithfully reproduced in him. He is one of those poets who, in our own day, have been recovered to public estimation, and have served as the idols of a clique; but, with all his exquisite fancy, the great melody of his verse, and that power over the reader which springs from deep earnestness and can be replaced by nothing, he suffers from long intervals of dulness and tortured conceits. However, no reader should certainly ever miss an opportunity of making the acquaintance of Crashaw's poetry. The title of the volume containing most of his religious verse is *Steps to the Temple*; it was published in 1646 under the editorship of some admirer. A new series (1652), published at Paris under the title of *Carmen Deo Nostro*, was probably prepared by himself. His secular poems, published in 1648 as a second part of *Steps to the Temple*, are called *Delights of the Muses*: the best and most famous is the *Wishes to an Unknown Mistress*, and another celebrated piece is *Music's Duel*, borrowed from Famianus Strada's Latin *Contention between a Nightingale and a Musician*. Another famous imitation of the same thing is to be found in Ford's *Lover's Melancholy*.

§ 4. These religious writers are succeeded by a cluster of Court poets. The oldest of these is THOMAS CAREW, son of Sir Matthew Carew, Master in Chancery. He was educated at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and spent his life in the service of the Court, as gentleman of the privy chamber and Sewer in ordinary to the King. His poems, which are short and

chiefly amatory, gained him considerable admiration in his day. His extraordinary sensuality has probably had some influence upon the opinion of later ages, but he deserves to be redeemed in some permanent form from the obloquy into which he has fallen with most readers. Campbell's cold and rather pedantic criticism seems to hit the mark as well as anything: "The want of boldness and expansion in Carew's thoughts and subjects excludes him from rivalry with great poetical names; nor is it difficult, even within the narrow pale of his works, to discover some faults of affectation, and of still more objectionable indelicacy. But among the poets who have walked in the same limited path he is pre-eminently beautiful, and deservedly ranks among the first of those who gave a cultivated grace to our lyrical strains." Indeed, his highest lyric flights are a convincing proof of a genius that is closely allied, on one hand, to the great Elizabethans, and, on the other, bridges over the gulf between their splendid song and the more formal notes of the Restoration age.

THOMAS CAREW (1598–1639?).

The second of this group is the greatest of all the secondary poets of the time. ROBERT HERRICK was born in London, and educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, from which he migrated to Trinity Hall. A large part of his youth was spent in the pursuits of a young literary man about town, and in the company of the young poets who surrounded Ben Jonson. He took Orders in 1629, and was presented to the quiet living of Dean Prior, on the southern edge of Dartmoor. The place was charming, and he has celebrated the beauty of the glen down which the Dean Burn falls in cascades from the moor; but he found no compensation for the society of wits and poets in the unsympathetic companionship of the rural "salvages" among whom he was compelled to live; and, not satisfied with complaining of their "rude and warty incivility," he satirised some of them individually in a few nasty and feeble epigrams. Meanwhile, he continued to write his beautiful lyrics, until, in 1647, he was ejected as a Royalist and came back to London. The bulk of his poems, contained in the *Hesperides* and *Noble Numbers*, appeared in 1648. Restored to his living in 1662, he returned, and died there in 1674. His poems are all lyric: the *Hesperides* are, for the most part, songs of love and wine interspersed with epigrams; while the *Noble Numbers* are religious. He is a singular example of that union of the earthly and the divine which is so characteristic of a certain class of lyric poets. Yet his religious poetry strikes the most masculine note which sacred verse touched in his age; and his *Hesperides* are not altogether sensual, as anybody who knows the familiar lines to Anthea, one of the most splendid outbursts of lyric love in English, will immediately remember. But words convey very little idea of the grace which

ROBERT HERRICK (1591–1674).

Contradictions in Herrick's work.

accompanies all Herrick's work: he is an author who must be appreciated at first hand. In Herrick, again, there is clear evidence of a transition in poetry. While he retains that spontaneous gift of expression, the true eloquence of the Elizabethan poets, he manifests that choiceness of finish and attention to form which, in the poetry of the next century, sometimes degenerated into prose. In fancy, in genius, in power over the melody of verse, he is never deficient; and it is easy to see that, in the softness and richness of his imagination, he had been inspired by the lovely pastoral and lyric movements of Fletcher and Heywood.

Below Carew and Herrick come two fresh types of the Cavalier poet, SIR JOHN SUCKLING and RICHARD LOVELACE. Both underwent persecution, and both were reduced to poverty. Suckling almost committed suicide; Lovelace was imprisoned long and often for his adherence to the loyal doctrines of his party, and is said to have died in abject distress. Both were men of elegant, if not of profound scholarship, and both give examples of the spirit of loyalty to their king and of gallantry to ladies. Many of Suckling's love-songs are equal, if not superior, to the most beautiful examples of that mixture of gay badinage with tender, if not very deeply felt, devotion which characterises French courtly and erotic poetry of the seventeenth century; and his thoughts are expressed with that cameo-like neatness and refinement of phrase which is the great merit of the minor French poets, from Marot to Béranger. But his most celebrated production is his *Ballad upon a Wedding*, in which, assuming the character of a rustic, he describes the marriage of a fashionable couple, Roger Boyle, then Lord Broghill and afterwards Earl of Orrery, and Lady Margaret Howard. In this inimitable gem there is a perfect grace and elegance, which is enhanced by the well-assumed *naïveté* of the style. Lovelace is more serious and earnest than Suckling; his lyrics are songs of devoted loyalty, and have little in common with the half-passionate, half-jesting fancy of his rival. Some of his most charming lyrics were written in prison: the famous lines to Althea, which, with the songs, *To Lucasta on Going to the Wars* and *To Lucasta on Going beyond the Seas*, constitute his chief claim to reputation, were written in the gate-house at Westminster. Suckling's poems and three out of his four plays were collected posthumously under the title of *Fragmenta Aurea* (1646). Lovelace's chief collection is called *Lucasta* (1649).

Sir John Suckling (1609–1642), Richard Lovelace (1618–1658).

The gay spirit which runs through the minor poetry of this epoch, may be traced back to a period considerably earlier—to the contemporaries of Ben Jonson and the great dramatists. We have already said something of the chief poets and playwrights who belonged to the "Tribe of Ben"; these and their contemporaries, and even a serious poet like Drummond of

Influence of the "Tribe of Ben" on this period.

Hawthornden, all exhibit a certain tendency to intellectual ingenuity, mixed at first with a certain pedantry which was derived, in Drummond's case, from his models, the masters of the Italian sonnet, and gradually vanished as time went on.

§ 5. WILLIAM BROWNE was born at Tavistock and educated at Exeter College, Oxford. He was the author of several very graceful lyrics and short poems, and of two pastoral works called *Britannia's Pastorals* (first part published in 1613) and *The Shepherd's Pipe* (1614), which were undoubtedly suggested by the pastoral school of Sidney and Spenser. They contain, in their descriptions of rural life, much that is very pretty, but are guilty of that ineradicable defect which accompanies all idyllic poetry, however beautiful it may be in detail—namely, the want of probability in the scenes and characters, when the reader tests them by referring to his own experience of the realities of rustic life. Browne's verse is almost uniformly well-knit, easy, and harmonious; and the attentive reader can select many passages from this poet, now so little read, which show great happiness of thought and expression.

WILLIAM BROWNE (1591–1643?).

WILLIAM HABINGTON is a poet of very much the same order as Browne, although his writings are principally devoted to love. He was, like Crashaw, a Romanist, and was born at Hindlip Hall, near Worcester. He married Lucy Herbert, a daughter of Lord Powis; and it was this lady whom, with an admiration for his wife uncommon among poets, he celebrated in his *Castara* (1634), a poem of much ingenuity and occasional grace. This, and his tragi-comedy, *The Queen of Arragon* (1640), are both free from the immorality that stains the most graceful poems of the age—indeed, it is generally agreed that they err in the other direction. Although usually love-songs, Habington's collected works show, some a moral, others a religious tendency.

WILLIAM HABINGTON (1605–1654).

§ 6. We now come to those writers who exercised a most important influence, not merely by winning popularity in their own age, but by directing English verse into the channel which it followed during the greater part of the next century. The eldest of these was EDMUND WALLER, who was born at Coleshill in Hertfordshire, was educated at Eton and King's College, Cambridge, and entered Parliament at a very early age. His family was ancient and dignified; he had great wealth; his accomplishments were varied and his manners fascinating; but his character was timid and selfish, and his political principles fluctuated with every change that might threaten his safety or his interest. He sat for many years in Parliament, where the readiness of his repartee and the originality of his speeches made him "the darling of the House of Commons." It was unfortunate that a man whose light talents were fitted only to adorn a court should be obliged to take part in public

The new poetry.

EDMUND WALLER (1606–1687).

affairs at so serious a crisis as that which occurred during his Parliamentary life; but Waller seems to have floated scatheless for a while through the storms of the Civil War, trusting, like the nautilus amid shoals and quicksands, to his own fragility. He showed repeated signs of tergiversation during that difficult period, professing adherence to Puritan and Republican doctrine, while really sympathising with the Court party; and on more than one occasion he was accused distinctly of military treachery. Even his consummate adroitness did not always succeed in securing his impunity; and, in 1643, the House convicted him of a plot to betray London to the King. He narrowly escaped capital punishment, but was imprisoned, fined £10,000, and banished for some time. He spent this interval in France. His conduct at this juncture seems to have been mean and abject. Although he was Hampden's first cousin, and therefore a direct connection of Oliver Cromwell himself, whom he celebrated in one of his best poems, Waller was ready to hail any political change with enthusiasm, and panegyrised Cromwell in 1655 and Charles II in 1660 with equal fervour, if not with equal success. He lived to see the accession of James II, and to prophesy with accuracy the fatal results of his policy. During the whole of his life Waller was the idol of society; but his pliant and shifty conduct brought him neither much trust nor much respect. In his own day, and in the succeeding generation, his poetry enjoyed the highest repute. It was said that he carried to perfection the art of expressing graceful and sensible ideas in the clearest and most harmonious language; and his example acted powerfully on Dryden and Pope. But his poetry owed its influence rather to the good sense and good taste which led him to avoid faults than to the ardour and enthusiasm which alone can produce beautiful verse. The regular and well-balanced line of Waller, the parent of Pope's reasonable Alexandrine, always gratifies the judgment, but appeals very little to the heart or imagination. Here and there in his works may be found strokes of happy ingenuity which may be due either to accident or to genius; as, for example, the line "He catched at love and filled his arm with bays," in which, lamenting the cruelty of his mistress, and boasting that his disappointment as a lover had given him immortality as a poet, he alludes to the fable of Apollo and Daphne. Most of his poems are love verses, chief among them those addressed to Lady Dorothy Sidney, afterwards Countess of Sunderland, under the name of Sacharissa; but his panegyric on Cromwell contains many passages of dignity and force. He was less successful in his longer work, *The Battle of the Summer Islands*, in which, in a strain half serious, half comic, he described an attack upon a stranded whale—the "Summer Islands" being the Bermudas. His collected poems appeared first in 1645, but a second part was published posthumously in 1690; and the first part contains,

Waller's popularity and influence on post-Restoration poetry.

generally speaking, fugitive lyrics and other pieces. His panegyrics were published separately.

§ 7. SIR WILLIAM D'AVENANT was born in the same year with Waller, and was one of the most active literary and political personages of his day. He is chiefly interesting to us as being the leading instrument in the theatrical revival of the Restoration. He was Shakespeare's godson, and was, for a few years of his youth, one of the household of Lord Brooke, the most seriously Senecan of all the dramatists. His life was spent in literary pursuits, and in the successful endeavour, during the Commonwealth, to reintroduce the drama into England under the form of a musical entertainment. He became Poet Laureate in 1638, succeeding Ben Jonson, and, during his life, wrote a considerable amount of verse. Among his plays were *Albovine* (1629), *The Cruel Brother* (1630), *The Siege of Rhodes* (1656), *The Law Against Lovers* (1662), and many more. One of his principal non-dramatic works is the poem of *Gondibert* (1651), narrating a long series of lofty and chivalrous adventures in a dignified and somewhat monotonous manner. It is written in the peculiar four-lined stanza with alternate rhymes first employed by Sir John Davies in *Nosce Teipsum*, and afterwards by Dryden in his *Annus Mirabilis*. This is, however, a form of versification singularly unfitted for continuous narrative; and its employment may be one cause of the neglect into which D'Avenant's once admired work has fallen. To-day there are probably not ten men in England who have read it through.

SIR WILLIAM D'AVENANT (1606–1668).

"*Gondibert*" (1651).

SIR JOHN DENHAM was the son of a judge who was from 1609 to 1617 Chief Baron of the Exchequer in Ireland, and a supporter of the Royalist cause. Although a poet of the secondary order, one work of his, *Cooper's Hill* (1642), will always occupy an important place in any account of English literature during the seventeenth century. This place it owes, not only to its specific merits, but to its very prominent position as a work of topographical poetry. In this class of writing the poet chooses some individual scene, round which he accumulates his descriptive or contemplative passages. Denham selected for this purpose a beautiful spot upon the Thames near Richmond; and, in his description of the scene itself, as well as in the reflections which it suggests, he rose to a noble elevation. Four lines, indeed, in which he expresses the hope that his own verse may possess the qualities which he attributes to the Thames, will be quoted again and again as one of the finest and happiest pieces of verse in any language. This passage did not appear until the edition of 1655. The lines run thus:—

SIR JOHN DENHAM (1615–1669).

> "O could I flow like thee, and make thy stream
> My great example, as it is my theme!
> Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull;
> Strong without rage; without o'erflowing full."

§ 8. One of the most accomplished writers of his day, and the poet whose influence, with that of Waller, was felt most strongly by the poets of the next century, was ABRAHAM COWLEY. He was the son of a London stationer and was educated at Westminster School. His intellectual precocity was very remarkable; for in 1633 he published his first poems, written when he was only thirteen. These, called *Poetical Blossoms*, were enthusiastic imitations of Spenser. Somewhat later he wrote a pastoral drama called *Love's Riddle*, which he published in 1638. In 1637 he went to Trinity College, Cambridge, but in 1644, when he was a Master of Arts and minor fellow, he was ejected from his college for his Royalist sympathies, and migrated to St. John's College, Oxford. While at Cambridge (1641) he wrote his comedy, *The Guardian*, which was acted before Prince Charles. The title of this play, re-written in 1658, was changed to *The Cutter of Coleman Street*, and was acted in 1661. Among his contemporaries he had the reputation of being one of the best scholars and most distinguished poets of his age. During the earlier part of his life he had been confidentially employed, both in England and France, in the service of Charles I and his Queen; and in 1646 he followed Henrietta Maria to Paris. But, on attaining middle age, he determined to carry out a philosophical project which he had long fondly cherished, and to live in rural and literary retirement. He was disappointed in obtaining the provision which, as he thought, his services had deserved; but, receiving a grant of some crown leases which produced a moderate income, he quitted London and went to reside near Chertsey (1665). But his dreams of ease and tranquillity were not fulfilled; he was involved in continual squabbles with his tenants, from whom he could extract no rent; and he speaks with constant querulousness of the hostility and vexations to which he was subjected. He died of a fever caused by a cold which he had caught in the fields, but not before he had learned that rural solitude was no panacea for the annoyances and cares of the ordinary world.

ABRAHAM COWLEY (1618–1667).

Cowley was highly regarded among the writers of his time both as a poet and as an essayist. His essays are only eleven in number, but his immense and multifarious learning, well digested and brilliantly polished, renders his prose works, in which he frequently includes passages of verse, little less delightful to read than the fascinating pages of Montaigne. There are few writers so substantial as Cowley: few whose productions have so peculiar a charm for the reader as he grows older and more contemplative. As a poet, Cowley's reputation, immense in his own day, has much diminished; this decline is to be attributed to that abuse of intellectual ingenuity, that passion for learned, far-fetched, and recondite allusions which was to a certain extent the vice of his age. He had very little passion or

Cowley's essays (1668).

His poetry.

depth of sentiment; and in the love-verses, which, like every other aspiring poet, he considered himself bound to write, he substituted the play of intellect for the unaffected outpouring of genuine feeling. He was deeply versed in both Greek and Latin literature, and his imitations, paraphrases, and translations show a perfect knowledge of his originals and a great mastery over the resources of English. He paraphrased the odes of Anacreon; and his *Pindaric Odes* (1656) were confessedly "written in imitation of the Stile and Manner of Pindar"; but their resemblance to the odes of the Theban Eagle is merely external. Cowley seems always on the watch to seize some ingenious and unsuspected parallelism of ideas and images; and, when the illustration is so found, the shock of surprise which the reader feels is produced by a flash of wit rather than by a stroke of electric genius. Cowley lived at the moment when the revolution inaugurated by Bacon was beginning to produce its first-fruits. The Royal Society, then recently founded, was astonishing the world and its own members by the extent of the horizon which was opening before the bold pioneers of inductive science. With this mighty movement Cowley deeply sympathised; and perhaps the finest of his lyric compositions are those in which, with a grave and well-adorned eloquence, he proclaims the genius and predicts the triumph of Bacon and his disciples in physical science.

Cowley meditated, but left unfinished, one long epic poem of great pretensions. This was the *Davideis* (1656), and its subject was the sufferings and glories of David, King of Israel. But this work is now completely neglected. Biblical personages and events have rarely, with the sublime exception of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, been successfully transported from the majestic language of Scripture; and it may be maintained, without much fear of contradiction, that Cowley's rhymed heroic couplet is not the form of versification which can best support the reader's attention through a long epic narrative: his genius was certainly far more lyric than epic. He had himself come under Waller's influence, like Denham and others; and his shorter lyric poems became, in their turn, the means of transmitting the "correct" style to English poetry. Waller probably had as much direct influence as Cowley upon Dryden and Pope and their contemporaries; but it is certainly in Cowley's Pindaric metres and heroic couplets that, for the first time, we see the stereotyped neatness of the eighteenth as distinct from the various ingenuity of the seventeenth century. Lyric extravagance gives way to a prosaic moderation of tone, and the tortured conceit is exchanged for the choice epigram.

The "Davideis" (1656).

Cowley's literary importance.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

OTHER POETS OF THE CAROLINE PERIOD

SIR JOHN BEAUMONT (1583–1627), an elder brother of Francis Beaumont the dramatist, wrote a poem in the heroic couplet, called *Bosworth Field*, which was published, together with other remains, by his son Sir John Beaumont (1629).

JOSEPH BEAUMONT (1616–1699), Master of Peterhouse, Cambridge, wrote a philosophical poem called *Psyche, or Love's Mystery* (1648), which was intended as an orthodox counterblast to Henry More's *Song of the Soul* (see below).

RICHARD BRATHWAITE (1588?–1673), born at Kendal and educated at Oriel College, Oxford, and Pembroke College, Cambridge, left behind him a great amount of poetry of all kinds, which shows much versatility, but is seldom more than mediocre. He is generally remembered as Drunken Barnaby from his famous doggerel poem in Latin and English, *Barnabæ Itinerarium, or Barnabee's Journal* (1638).

WILLIAM CHAMBERLAYNE (1619–1689), a physician at Shaftesbury in Dorsetshire, wrote *Pharonnida* (1659), an heroic poem in five books, which contains some vigorous passages. The versification, in spite of ruggedness, is often beautiful, and Mr. A. H. Bullen has said that "both in its faults and its beauties it bears considerable resemblance to *Endymion*." Chamberlayne was also the author of a tragi-comedy entitled *Love's Victory* (1658), which was acted after the Restoration under the new name (1678) of *Wit led by the Nose, or the Poet's Revenge*.

JOHN CLEVELAND (1613–1658), the son of a schoolmaster in Holy Orders at Loughborough, was a fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, and distinguished himself, during the Civil War, as a soldier and poet on the King's side. In 1647 he published *The Rebel Scot*, a severe satire on the Scotch; he was imprisoned at Yarmouth in 1655, was released by Cromwell, and died about two years after. Some of his writings are amatory, and, although conceited, contain true poetry. It is said that Butler borrowed not a little from him in his *Hudibras*.

RICHARD CORBET (1582–1635), Bishop of Oxford from 1628 to 1632, and then of Norwich, was a celebrated wit and poet, and a great friend of Ben Jonson. His poems, witty and satirical, were first collected and published in 1647. The best known are his *Journey into France*, and the charming *Farewell to the Fairies*, one of the most graceful lyrics of its period.

CHARLES COTTON (1630–1687), best known as the friend of Isaak Walton, as the translator (1685) of Montaigne, and as the author of the second part of *The Complete Angler*, added to the edition of 1676, lived at Beresford upon the river Dove, celebrated for its trout. He wrote several poems, some of great beauty, others humorous and rather coarse. His *Voyage to Ireland*, according to Campbell, seems to anticipate the manner of Anstey in the *Bath Guide*.

SIR RICHARD FANSHAWE (1608–1666), brother of Thomas, first Viscount Fanshawe, was secretary of war to Prince Charles, afterwards Charles II. He was ambassador to Portugal and Spain in the reign of Charles II, and died at Madrid. He translated (1647) the *Pastor Fido* of Guarini, Camoëns' *Lusiad* in 1655, and (1671) Mendoza's *Querer por solo querer*. His song, *The Saint's Encouragement*, is full of clever satire, and all his verse is forcible, with here and there a touch of true poetical beauty.

HENRY KING (1592–1669), chaplain to James I, and afterwards (1642) Bishop of Chichester, wrote chiefly religious poetry. His style

is not free from the fashionable conceits of his age, but he was capable of writing excellent lyric verse.

HENRY MORE (1614–1687), fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, is known chiefly as one of the leaders of the Cambridge Platonists, and spent his whole life at his University, absorbed in theological and philosophical studies. Starting from the Puritan point of view, he became more and more of a mystic, and adopted the views not only of the later Platonists but of the cabalistic writers. His eccentric philosophical poem, *Psychozoia Platonica, or a Platonical Song of the Soul* (1642), is only one of a series of treatises and discourses, and is of very little interest to the literary student. More is buried in Christ's College Chapel.

MARGARET, DUCHESS OF NEWCASTLE (1624?–1674), daughter of Sir Thomas Lucas, and maid of honour to Queen Henrietta Maria, published a book called *Poems and Fancies* (1653). She brought out no less than twelve folio volumes of poems, plays, and philosophical prose, to some of which her husband, himself a playwright, contributed; but her writings are more voluminous than valuable.

KATHERINE PHILIPS (1631–1664), the wife of a gentleman at Cardigan, wrote under the pseudonym of Orinda, and was very popular as a writer with her contemporaries, who called her the "matchless" Orinda. Her style is less conceited and quaint than usual, but it has a distinct leaning to the commonplace.

THOMAS STANLEY (1625–1678), born at Cumberlow in Hertfordshire, was educated at Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, and, after travelling abroad, came back to England and lived in the Middle Temple. In 1647 he published a volume of poems, chiefly love-songs, full of beautiful thought and happy fancy, but marked by the usual tendency to odd conceits.

JOHN TAYLOR (1580–1634), known as the "Water-Poet" or the "Sculler," was born at Gloucester, and, after some service in the navy in his youth, set up in London as a waterman, and used to travel in a wherry along the coasts. He was also a great pedestrian, and travelled on foot from London to Edinburgh, and thence to Braemar, in 1618—a journey described in his *Penniless Pilgrimage* of the same year. Possessing a rough humour and a facile pen, he composed several strange productions, rough poems and pamphlets of all kinds, many of them scurrilous and dull. In the list given by Mr. Goodwin in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, 157 different works by Taylor are enumerated. The following may be given as specimen titles: *A Kicksey-Winsey, or a Lerry Come-Twang* (1619); *A very Merry Wherry-Ferry Voyage, or York for my Money* (1622); *A most Horrible, Terrible, Tolerable, Termagant Satire* (1635); and *The World turned Upside-down* (1647). Taylor made a name for himself by his attacks on well-known or notorious people; and Thomas Coryat the traveller and George Wither were among those who felt his satire.

It is almost needless to mention that most of the dramatists were lyric poets, and that their songs are actually the best things of their age in their simplicity and freedom from extravagant metaphor. It is a relief to turn from the tortuous phrases of these lesser poets, to say nothing of Herrick and Crashaw, to the songs scattered through the plays of so late a dramatist as Shirley. In the dramatists' lyrics the finest traditions of Elizabethan poetry were preserved, even during a period of obvious decadence in verse-writing; and these survived, with a certain remnant of life, in the more formal lyrics of Dryden and his companion playwrights. The indefatigable scholar, Mr. A. H. Bullen, in his collections of Elizabethan songs, has rescued many of these exquisite lyrics from total oblivion.

CHAPTER X.

THE PROSE WRITERS OF THE CAROLINE PERIOD.

§ 1. Theological character of the age. JOHN HALES and WILLIAM CHILLINGWORTH. § 2. SIR THOMAS BROWNE. § 3. THOMAS FULLER. § 4. JEREMY TAYLOR: his life. § 5. His works. § 6. His style: comparison with Spenser. § 7. The sectaries: RICHARD BAXTER. The Quakers: FOX, PENN, and BARCLAY.

Religious tendency of Caroline prose.

§ 1. THE Civil War, which led to the temporary overthrow of the ancient English monarchy, was in many respects a religious as well as a political contest. It was a struggle for liberty of faith at least as much as for liberty of civil government. The prose literature of this time, therefore, as well as of a period extending considerably beyond it, possesses a strongly religious or theological character. The blood of martyrs, it has been said, is the seed of the Church; and the alternate triumphs and persecutions through which passed both the Anglican Church and its countless dissenting rivals, naturally developed to the highest degree both the intellectual powers and the Christian energies of their adherents. The most notable outburst of theological eloquence which the Church of England has ever exhibited, in the writings of Jeremy Taylor, Barrow, and the other great Anglican fathers, was answered by the appearance, in the ranks of the sectaries, of many remarkable men, some hardly inferior in learning and genius to the leaders whose doctrines they opposed; while others, with a ruder yet more fervent enthusiasm, were the founders of dissenting communities. This, for example, was the case with the Quakers.

JOHN HALES (1584–1656).

The "ever memorable" JOHN HALES enjoyed among his contemporaries a vast reputation for his immense learning and the acuteness of his wit. He was born at Bath, entered Corpus Christi College, Oxford, as a scholar in 1597, became a fellow of Merton and, in 1612, public lecturer in Greek. From 1616 to 1619, he was in Holland as Sir Dudley Carleton's chaplain, and attended the Synod of Dort. In 1619 he retired to the learned obscurity of a fellowship at Eton, where he passed the sad and dangerous years of civil strife. In 1642 his writings rendered him so obnoxious to the dominant party that he was ejected from the canonry which

Laud had given him at Windsor, and was obliged to hide: a few years later (1649), he was deprived of his fellowship, and, after living as a private tutor at Colnbrook, went into lodgings at Eton, and for some time maintained his living by the sale of his books. Dying in 1656, he left behind him the reputation of one of the most solid and acute intellects which his country had produced. The greater part of his writings are controversial, treating of the political and religious questions which then agitated men's minds. His works were not published in full till 1765. His posthumous *Golden Remains* (1659) contains his valuable letters to Sir Dudley Carleton on the Synod of Dort (1618). While attending its sittings he was converted from the Calvinistic opinions which he had hitherto held, and took the standpoint of Episcopius and the Arminian divines. Both his controversial writings and his sermons are fine examples of that rich yet chastened eloquence which characterises the great English divines of the seventeenth century, and was carried to the highest pitch of rhetorical splendour by Taylor and of majestic grandeur by Barrow.

William Chillingworth (1602-1644).

William Chillingworth, also an eminent controversialist and an able defender of Protestantism, was converted to the Roman faith while a fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, and went to the Jesuits' College at Douai. But he subsequently returned to Oxford, where, in 1634, he renounced his new faith, and, going to all lengths the other way, published in 1637 his celebrated work against Roman Catholicism, entitled, *The Religion of Protestants a Safe Way to Salvation.* This was an answer to a treatise, *Charity Mistaken* (1630), by a Jesuit father named Edward Knott, who had maintained in it that unrepenting heretics could not be saved. "In his long parenthetical periods," says Hallam, "as in those of other old English writers, in his copiousness, which is never empty or tautological, there is an inartificial eloquence springing from strength of intellect and sincerity of feeling, that cannot fail to impress the reader. But his chief excellence is the close reasoning which avoids every dangerous admission, and yields to no ambiguousness of language. . . . Throughout the volume, Chillingworth contravenes the prevailing theories of the Anglican Church full as distinctly as those of the Roman. . . . In later times his book obtained a high reputation; he was called the immortal Chillingworth; he was the favourite of all the moderate and the latitudinarian writers, of Tillotson, Locke, and Warburton. Those of opposite tenets, when they happen to have read his book, can do nothing else but condemn its tendency." Chillingworth, in 1638, became canon and Chancellor of Salisbury; five years later he joined the Royalist army, and was taken prisoner at the fall of Arundel Castle. As he was ill he was allowed to retire to the bishop's palace at Chichester, where he died early in 1644. He is buried in Chichester Cathedral.

§ 2. The writings of SIR THOMAS BROWNE, although less exclusively theological than those of his contemporaries, belong chronologically, as well as by virtue of their style and manner, to this department. Both as a man and as a writer he is one of the most peculiar and eccentric of our great prose authors, and the task of giving a clear appreciation of him is unusually difficult. He was an exceedingly learned man, born in London, educated at Winchester College and at Pembroke College, Oxford, and, from 1637 onwards, a physician in the ancient city of Norwich. Here he married and lived peacefully, enjoying the society of his friends, among whom was Bishop Hall, and taking no part in the troubles of the Civil War. He was knighted by Charles II in 1671. His life was unusually prolonged, for he died in 1682, at the age of seventy-seven. His writings are of a most miscellaneous character, ranging from observations on natural science to the most arduous subtleties of moral and metaphysical speculation. In 1646 he published the *Pseudodoxia Epidemica*, his famous treatise on "vulgar errors," to a later edition of which (1658) were added the even more celebrated *Hydriotaphia, or Urn Burial*, and *The Garden of Cyrus*. *Urn Burial* was suggested by the digging up of some Roman funeral urns in Norfolk; the *Pseudodoxia* is a curious and voluminous attempt to overthrow many of the common notions and erroneous superstitions on various subjects. But a mere specification of his subject must altogether fail in giving an idea of Browne's strange and fascinating writings. Like Montaigne, he combines immense and recondite reading with a personal frankness and discursive simplicity; at every step the author starts some extraordinary theory, which he illustrates by analogies so singular and unexpected that they infect the reader with a mingled feeling of amusement and surprise; and all this in a style absolutely bristling with quaint latinisms, which would be pedantic in any other writer, but were the natural garb of Browne's thought. His diction is stiff with scholastic terms, with Latin epithets and past participles transported wholesale into English. The contrast between the simplicity of Browne's character and the out-of-the-way learning and odd caprices of theory in which he perpetually indulged, makes him one of the quaintest of writers; yet no other English writer has risen to so high a dignity of sombre eloquence as he can claim in the final chapter of *Urn Burial*. Although his sentiments were deeply religious, he was also naturally something of a sceptic, and his sudden turns of thought and strange comparisons keep the reader constantly awake. In his capacity for pursuing one idea through every conceivable (and inconceivable) manifestation, he stands almost alone, and his ingenuity on such occasions is absolutely portentous. For instance, in *The Garden of Cyrus*, a treatise on the quincunx, he finds quin-

SIR THOMAS BROWNE (1605–1682).

His style: its Latinism.

His exhaustive imagination.

cunxes on the earth, in the waters, and in the heavens, nay, in the very intellectual constitution of the soul. He has a particular tendency to dwell upon the dark mysteries of time and the universe, and makes us thrill with the solemnity with which he suggests the nothingness of mortal life and the insignificance of human interests when compared with the immeasurable ages that lie before and behind us. In all Sir Thomas Browne's works an intimate companionship is established between the writer and the reader; but the book in which he ostensibly proposes to communicate his own personal feelings and opinions most unreservedly, is his earliest work, *Religio Medici* (1642), a species of confession of faith. In this he by no means confines himself to theological matters, but takes the reader into his confidence in the same artless and undisguised manner as the immortal Montaigne. The images and illustrations with which his writings are crowded produce upon the reader the effect of the familiar yet mysterious forms that make up an Egyptian hieroglyphic; they have the same fantastic oddity, the same quaint stiffness in their attitude and general combination, and impress the mind with the same air of solemn rigidity and outlandish remoteness from the ordinary objects of our contemplation. Browne, with Milton and Jeremy Taylor, is one of the three great masters of decorative prose. This prose of the Caroline epoch is, it must be conceded, a trifle debased when compared with the virile prose of Elizabeth's reign. It gives way to decadent mannerisms; it abuses the permissible employment of Latinity; it trusts to fine perorations and far-fetched similes. Its whole effect is admirable and astonishing, but it is the effect of a *tour de force*, of a brilliant effort rather than of a spontaneous masterpiece. Browne is less clumsy in his constructions than either Milton or Taylor, who never cared where their sentences led them; in the variety of his vocabulary and his sense of beauty in words he is their equal, if not here and there their superior. It is merely the comparative smallness of his work, considered as a whole, that tempts us to overlook his real importance.

Browne and the prose of his epoch.

§ 3. THOMAS FULLER is another great and attractive prose writer of the period, and has in some respects a kind of intellectual resemblance to Browne. Unlike Browne, however, he passed a very active life, and took a prominent part in the Civil War, in which he embraced the Royalist cause. It is said that he was to have been rewarded for his services with a bishopric, had the intention of the restored Court not been defeated by his death. He studied at Queens' and afterwards at Sidney-Sussex College in Cambridge, and, having taken Holy Orders, gained some fame by his preaching. His uncle, Bishop Davenant, gave him a prebendal stall in Salisbury Cathedral and the living of Broadwindsor in Dorset. About 1641, when he had

THOMAS FULLER (1608–1661).

resigned these preferments, he became curate of the Savoy and, in 1642, just at the outbreak of the Civil War, offended the Parliament by a sermon. The King had left his capital and was on the eve of declaring war against his subjects, and Fuller's advice of reconciliation with him was not palatable. After this he joined Charles at Oxford, and this time displeased the Court party by a degree of moderation which they called lukewarmness. Seeing that he thus managed to excite dissatisfaction on both sides, his unpopularity is fairly to be attributed to his reasonable and moderate views. During the war he was attached as chaplain to the army commanded by Sir Ralph Hopton in the West of England, and took part in the famous defence of Basing House, when Sir William Waller and the Parliamentary army were forced to abandon the siege. During his campaigning he industriously collected material for his most popular work, *The Worthies of England and Wales* (1662), which, however, was not published until after his death. During the Commonwealth he officiated at Waltham Abbey; at the Restoration he recovered his benefices, and was appointed chaplain extraordinary to the King. Posterity has associated Fuller's name with his *Worthies* rather than with his *Church History* (1655); but this and his sermons exhibit all those peculiarities of style which made him one of the most singular writers of the age. His *History of Cambridge* (1655) too must not be forgotten. His enthusiasm as an antiquarian led him to write the history of his own University, and his work has, ever since, remained a storehouse of phrase and anecdote upon whose treasures every succeeding writer has had to draw. His writings are eminently amusing, not only from the immense number of curious and anecdotic details which they contain, but also from the odd and frequently profound reflections suggested by these very details. The *Worthies* contains biographical notices of eminent Englishmen, in connection with the different counties, and furnishes an inexhaustible treasure of curious stories and observations. But whatever subject Fuller treats, he places it in so many new and unexpected lights, and introduces, to illustrate it, so many fresh and ingenious remarks that the reader's attention is incessantly kept alive. He was a man of a pleasant and jovial as well as an ingenious turn of mind; there is no sourness or asceticism in his way of thinking; he lights up the gravest and most unattractive passages with flashes of fancy, and, as frequently happens in men of a lively disposition, the sparkle of his wit is warmed by a glow of sympathy and tenderness. His learning was very extensive and very minute, and he drew from out-of-the-way and neglected corners of reading illustrations which give the mind a pleasant shock of novelty. One great source of his picturesqueness is his frequent use of antithesis; in his style antithesis is not what it frequently becomes in other authors, Dr. Johnson for example, a bare opposition of *words*, but is the juxta-

Fuller's picturesqueness.

position of apparently discordant ideas, from whose sudden contact flashes forth the spark of wit or the embodiment of some original conception. The shock of his antithetical oppositions is as creative as the action of a galvanic battery. He has been accused of levity in intermingling ludicrous images with serious matter, but these images are the reflection of his own cheerful, ingenious, and amiable nature; and, though their oddity may sometimes excite a smile, it is a smile which is never incompatible with serious feeling. He is said to have possessed an almost supernatural quickness of memory, yet he has given many precepts guarding against the abuse of that faculty; in the same way, he has shown that wit and ingenuity may go very well hand in hand with lofty morality and deep feeling. In a word, Fuller was an essentially wise and learned humorist with no less singularity of genius than Sir Thomas Browne, and with less than Browne's abstract indifference to ordinary human interests.

His use of antitheses and similes.

§ 4. But by far the greatest theological writer of the Anglican Church at this period was JEREMY TAYLOR. He was probably of a good but decayed family, but his father was a barber at Cambridge, where he was born. He received a sound education at the free grammar school which Dr. Perse had recently founded in Cambridge, and afterwards, as scholar and fellow of Caius College, became conspicuous for his talents and learning. He took Holy Orders, in 1633, at an unusually early age, and, at a sermon which he preached before Archbishop Laud, his youthful appearance and his "graceful and pleasant air" are said to have so attracted the Primate's notice that Taylor soon found himself one of his chaplains, and was presented with a fellowship at All Souls' College, Oxford. His career during the Civil War bears some resemblance to Fuller's, but he stood higher in the favour of the Cavalier party and the Court. He served as chaplain in the Royalist army, and was taken prisoner in 1644 at an action fought under the walls of Cardigan Castle; but he confesses that on this occasion, and on others which brought him into the hands of the Parliament, he was treated with generosity and indulgence. When the King's cause grew desperate, Taylor was in London, and Charles, on taking leave of him, made him a present of his watch. Taylor then placed himself under the protection of his friend the Earl of Carbery, and resided for some time at his seat of Golden Grove in Carmarthenshire. Taylor was married twice; first (1639, to a certain Phoebe Langsdale, who died in 1651, and afterwards, about 1655, to Joanna Bridges, who was reputed, without much foundation, to have been a natural daughter of Charles I. His second wife brought him a small fortune, but he was very unhappy in his children. During his sojourn at Golden Grove, Taylor kept a school, and continued to take an active part in the religious controversies of the day. The opinions which

JEREMY TAYLOR 1613-1667: his life.

he expressed were naturally distasteful to the dominant party, and, on at least three occasions, subjected him to imprisonment and sequestrations at the hands of the Government. In 1654 and 1655, for example, he was incarcerated twice for a short time in Chepstow Castle. In 1658 he migrated, with some hesitation and reluctance, to Ireland, where he was given a weekly lectureship at Lisburn, and lived at Portmore, near the banks of Lough Neagh and the seat of Lord Conway, his patron. At the Restoration his services were rewarded, not with the English bishopric which they deserved, but with the see of Down and Connor, to which Dromore was subsequently added. During the short time in which he held this preferment he was an example of the brightest qualities that can adorn the office of a bishop. He died at Lisburn in 1667; his last illness was a fever. He was buried in Dromore Cathedral, which he had rebuilt, and left behind him a reputation, not merely for eloquence, but for courtesy, charity, and zeal in the discharge of his episcopal duties.

§ 5. Taylor's works are very numerous and their subjects are very different; we will therefore content ourselves with mentioning the principal of them, and will then endeavour to give a general appreciation of his genius. As a controversialist, his best known work is the *Discourse of the Liberty of Prophesying* (1646), which must be understood to refer to the general profession of religious principles and the right of all Christians to toleration in the exercise of their worship. This book is the first complete and systematic defence of the great principle of religious toleration. Taylor's aim is to show how contrary it is, not only to the spirit of Christianity, but even to the true interests of government, to interfere with the profession and practice of religious bodies. Of course the argument, although its application is universal, was intended by Taylor to secure indulgence for the Church of England, once dominant, but then proscribed and persecuted by the violence of sectarians. His *Apology for Fixed and Set Forms of Worship* (1649) was an elaborate defence of the stately ritual and liturgy of the same Church. Among his disciplinary and practical works the longest is the very elaborate and quaint life of Christ, published under the title of *The Great Exemplar* (1649), in which the details scattered through the four Gospels and the Fathers are co-ordinated into one continuous narrative. Each chapter is followed by one or two dissertations upon points of practical religion arising out of it; and these, although long and often rambling, are always eminently picturesque. Their subjects cover very much the same ground as Taylor's most popular work, the two wonderful treatises on *The Rule and Exercises of Holy Living* (1650) and on *The Rule and Exercises of Holy Dying* (1651), which mutually correspond to and

Taylor's controversial works.

"The Great Exemplar" (1649).

"Holy Living" and "Holy Dying" (1650–1).

complete each other, forming an institute of Christian life and conduct adapted to every conceivable circumstance and relation of human existence. This devotional work has enjoyed, among the more intellectual type of English Churchmen, a popularity superior to that of any other religious manual; its use in every condition of life is so apparent, and the practical piety which it recommends receives so much ornament from the fine, solid style of the treatise, that one cannot wonder at its immortality. The least admirable of Taylor's numerous writings, and the only instance in which he went astray from his usual tone of courtesy and fairness, is his *Ductor Dubitantium* (1660), a manual dealing with questions of casuistry. His sermons are very numerous, and are among the most eloquent, learned, and powerful in the whole range of Christian religious literature. As in his character, so in his writings, Taylor is the ideal Anglican priest, learned, well skilled in theology and the writings of the Fathers, and combining with his consummate erudition an extremely practical simplicity and fervour.

Taylor's casuistry and sermons.

§ 6. Taylor's style is undoubtedly overcharged with learning and marred by that abuse and inaccuracy of quotation which disfigures a great deal of the prose of the age, but it is always uniformly magnificent. His materials are drawn from the whole extent of profane as well as sacred literature, and are fused together into a rich and gorgeous whole by the fire of a matchless imagination. No prose is more melodious than that of this great divine; his periods, although often immeasurably long, and evolving, in a series of subordinate clauses and illustrations, a train of images and comparisons, one springing out of another, roll on with a soft and mighty swell which has something of the enchantment of verse. He has been called by the great critic Jeffrey "the most Shakespearean of our great divines," but it would be more appropriate to compare him with Spenser. He has the same pictorial fancy, the same voluptuous and languishing harmony of style. If he can in any respect be likened to Shakespeare, it is, first, in the vividness of intellect which leads him to follow digressively the numerous ideas that spring up as he writes and often lead him apparently far away from his point of departure, and secondly, his constant preference for drawing his illustrations from the simplest and most familiar objects, from the opening rose, the infant streamlet, "the little rings and wanton tendrils of the vine," the morning song of the soaring lark, or the "fair cheeks and full eyes of childhood." Like Shakespeare, too, he was as fully in touch with the terrible and sublime as with the tender and affecting aspect of things; and, if he could give an exquisite picture of married love, he could also write the stern and awful sentences of the sermon on *Christ's Advent to Judgment*. Nevertheless, with Spenser's sweetness he has occasionally something of

His style: its eloquence and melody.

Comparison with Spenser and Shakespeare.

Spenser's luscious and enervated languor. The atmosphere of his work is close and easily satiates the reader. He had studied the Fathers so intensely that he had become infected with something of the lavish and Oriental imagery which abounds in many of those great writers—some of them, it must be remembered, Oriental not only in their style but also in their origin. Taking his personal character and his writings together, Jeremy Taylor may be called the English Fénelon; but, in venturing to make this parallel, we must not forget that each of these excellent writers and admirable men possessed the characteristic features of his respective country. Fénelon's writing, like Taylor's, is distinguished by a certain sweetness, which, nevertheless, is closely allied to the neat, clear, precise expression habitual to French authors and derived, not only from the Latin origin of the language, but from the continual preference in France for the imitation of antique models. Taylor, on the other hand, owes his share of the same quality to that rich and poetic susceptibility to natural beauty which gives so matchless a colour to the English poetry of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

§ 7. There is a natural temptation to compare Taylor with Bunyan—the great Royalist divine, the master of idealistic prose and its celestial harmonies, the scholar and prelate, with the chief of the Puritan theologians, the unlearned observer of mankind and writer for the people, the master of clear, practical, incisive sentences. The two, at all events in their thought and personal condition, are acutely opposed to each other, and yet meet on the common ground of their spirituality and their love of Christ. Milton and Bunyan, the chief Puritan writers, will be discussed in subsequent chapters, but a few words may now be added respecting some of the more remarkable divines of their party. Baxter demands a place in the history of the period, and, with him, George Fox, the fanatical founder of the sect of the Quakers, together with his more cultivated, yet not less earnest follower, William Penn, and Barclay, who defended with the arms of learning and argument a system originally founded by half frantic enthusiasm.

Puritan writers.

RICHARD BAXTER, born at Rowton in Shropshire, took Holy Orders in the Church of England, and won a great reputation by his parochial work at Kidderminster; but, after the Act of Uniformity was passed, he left the Church and became a Presbyterian. Few authors have been so prolific as he; the multitude of his tracts and religious works almost defies computation. He was remarkable for his consistency and uprightness. During the Civil War he preserved his loyalty to the King, while approving the claims of the Parliament; and, after the Restoration, he refused Clarendon's offer of the see of Hereford. From the time of his secession until the Revolution of 1688 he suffered unrelenting persecution, and was tried for libel before the brutal

RICHARD BAXTER (1615–1691).

Jeffreys. He died in London and is buried in Christ Church, Newgate Street. He was a man of vast learning, the purest piety, and the most indefatigable industry. In prison, in extreme poverty, chased like a hunted beast, suffering from a weak constitution and a painful and incurable disease, this meek yet invincible spirit still fought his fight, pouring forth book after book in favour of free worship, and opposing the quiet endurance of a primitive martyr to the rage and tyranny of the persecutor. His works have little to recommend them to a modern reader, save their spirit of toleration, and are little known in the present day. *The Saint's Everlasting Rest* (1650) is, however, still popular, and *A Call to the Unconverted* (1657) is remembered, if not read.

George Fox (1624–1691).

George Fox, the founder of the Society of Friends, was the son of a weaver at Fenny Drayton in Leicestershire, and was so completely without education that his numerous writings are filled with unintelligible gibberish, and in many instances, even after having been revised and put in order by disciples possessed of more learning, present curious and insoluble problems of meaning to the reader. The life of Fox was like that of many other ignorant enthusiasts; but he had something in him more enduring than mere fanaticism. Wandering about the country to preach his doctrines, the principal of which were a denial of all titles of respect, and a kind of quietism combined with hostility, not only to all formal clerical functions and establishments, but even to all institutions of government, he met with constant and furious persecution at the hands of the clergy, the county magistrates, and the rabble, whose manners were then much more brutal than in the present day. He has left in his *Journal* (1694) a curious record of his own adventures, and in particular of two interviews with Cromwell, upon whose mind the earnestness and sincerity of the poor Quaker seem to have produced an impression honourable to the goodness of the Protector's heart. Fox's claims to the power of prophecy and to the gift of detecting witches bear witness at once to his ignorance and to his simplicity, and to the universal prevalence of gross superstition; but we cannot deny to him the praise of ardent faith, deep, if unenlightened, benevolence, and a Christian spirit of patience under insults and injuries.

William Penn (1644–1718).

William Penn, the founder of the colony of Pennsylvania, played a very active and, his enemies alleged, not always very honourable part at the Court of James II, when that prince, under a transparent pretext of zeal for religious liberty, was endeavouring, by giving privileges to the dissenting and Nonconformist sects, to shake the power and influence of the Church of England, and thus to pave the way for the execution of his darling scheme, the establishment of the Roman Church in the country. Penn was the son of Admiral Sir William Penn and was for a while at Christ

Church, Oxford, but early adopted the Quaker doctrines. His name will ever be respected for the benevolence and wisdom he exhibited in founding that colony which was afterwards destined to become a wealthy and enlightened state, and in the excellent and humane precepts he gave for the conduct of relations between the first settlers and the Indian aborigines. The Society of Friends has always been conspicuous for peaceable behaviour, practical good sense, and much acuteness in worldly matters. Since their principles forbid them to take any part in warfare, and exclude them from almost all occupations but those of trade and commerce, the Friends have generally been thriving and rich, and, their numbers being small, they have been able to carry out those excellent and well-considered plans for mutual help and support which have made their charitable institutions the admiration of all philanthropists.

ROBERT BARCLAY (1648–1690).

ROBERT BARCLAY was a Scottish country gentleman of considerable attainments, who published a systematic defence of the doctrines of the sect which had been founded by the rude zeal of Fox. His celebrated *Apology for the True Christian Divinity* (1676) was published at Amsterdam in Latin. Like many controversial books, however, it attained its subsequent fame in an English form (1678).

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

THEOLOGIANS, &c., OF THE JACOBEAN AND CAROLINE PERIODS.

To the great name of Taylor we might add a host of names whose writings and piety were the bulwarks of the Anglican position in their own day, and, amid the religious deadness succeeding the Puritanism of the Commonwealth, preserved the Church of England from mere secularity. WILLIAM LAUD (1573–1645), Archbishop of Canterbury; JOSEPH HALL (1574–1656), Bishop of Norwich, famous too as a satirist; LANCELOT ANDREWES (1555–1626), Bishop of Winchester; and JOHN COSIN (1594–1672), Bishop of Durham, to say nothing of other names, contributed rather to the doctrinal and controversial than to the literary side of things. A few prelates and laymen, however, should be mentioned.

KING CHARLES I (1600–1649) himself is reputed to be the author of the curious *Icon Basilike, or the Portraiture of His Sacred Majesty in His Solitudes and Sufferings*, which is a series of pious meditations upon the troubles of his reign. The book is of little literary value, but there seems to be no sufficient evidence to doubt its authorship. JOHN GAUDEN (1605-1662), a not too estimable divine, who became Bishop of Exeter at the Restoration, and was translated to Worcester and died two years later, almost certainly edited it, and even claimed its authorship; and, on the ground of this statement, Puritan detractors have gladly accepted the book as a forgery.

JOHN EARLE (1601?–1665), who succeeded Gauden at Worcester in 1662, and was translated to Salisbury in 1663, wrote, while fellow of Merton, *Microcosmographie, or a Piece of the World discovered in Essays and Characters*, which appears to descend in a direct line

from the *Characters* of Sir Thomas Overbury (see below). The book was published anonymously in 1628. Hallam says, "In some of these short characters, Earle is worthy of comparison with La Bruyère; in others, perhaps the greater part, he has contented himself with pictures of ordinary manners, such as the varieties of occupation, rather than of intrinsic character, supply. In all, however, we find an acute observation and a happy humour of expression. The chapter entitled the Sceptic is best known; it is witty, but an insult throughout on the honest searcher after truth, which could have come only from one that was content to take up his own opinions for ease or profit." This severe remark, by the way, does not correspond with Earle's actual character as known to his contemporaries, and is, besides, a shallow generalisation. "Earle is always gay and quick to catch the ridiculous, especially that of exterior appearances; his style is short, describing well with a few words, but with much of the affected quaintness of that age. It is one of those books which give us a picturesque idea of the manners of our fathers at a period now become remote, and for this reason, were there no other, it would deserve to be read."

OWEN FELLTHAM (1602?–1668) was a Suffolk man, and lived in the Earl of Thomond's household. His work, entitled *Resolves: Divine, Moral, Political*, which he published first at the age of eighteen and augmented very largely in 1628, enjoyed great popularity for many years. Hallam says that Felltham is "not only a laboured and artificial, but a shallow writer." He owed much of his popularity to a pointed and sententious style, which, however, partakes too much of the literary vices of his age to be anything but obsolete.

PETER HEYLYN (1600–1662), fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, and prebendary of Westminster, was a divine and historian of pronounced Royalist tendencies, and was deprived of his prebend and other benefices for his loyalty. His *Microcosmus, or a Description of the Great World*, was published in 1621; but he is known principally as the chaplain and biographer of Archbishop Laud, whose life he wrote under the title of *Cyprianus Anglicus* (1668).

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY (1581–1613), who was poisoned in the Tower, wrote a work entitled *Characters* (1614), which shows a great power of observation and considerable skill in description. His character of *A Fair and Happy Milkmaid* has been often quoted and is one of the best in the book. Overbury also wrote poetry: his chief poem, *A Wife now the Widow of Sir T. Overbury* (1614), dealing with the subject of marriage, produced many contemporary imitations.

ROBERT SANDERSON (1587–1663), fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, who became Bishop of Lincoln at the Restoration, was one of the most eminent Anglican divines. He wrote works on casuistry and very erudite sermons; but he is chiefly remarkable for the piety and beauty of his life, which is recorded in Walton's *Lives*.

JAMES USSHER (1581–1656), the learned Archbishop of Armagh (1625), is best known by his chronological work, *The Annals*, which contains chronological tables of universal history from the Creation to the time of Vespasian. This work was published in Latin (first part 1650, second part 1654), and was translated into English in 1658, after Ussher's death. The marginal dates of the Authorised Version of the Bible are taken from Ussher. His *Britannicarum Ecclesiarum Antiquitates* (1639) should not be forgotten. Selden spoke of him as "learned to a miracle"; and probably Selden himself was his only superior in scholarship.

CHAPTER XI.

JOHN MILTON—A.D. 1608–1674.

§ 1. MILTON's early life and education. § 2. Travels in Italy. § 3. Returns to England and espouses the popular party. His *Areopagitica*. § 4. Made Latin secretary to the Council of State. His prose works. § 5. History of his life after the Restoration. His death. § 6. Three periods of Milton's literary career. FIRST PERIOD, 1623–1640:—*Hymn on the Nativity; Comus.* § 7. *Lycidas.* § 8. *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso.* § 9. Milton's Latin and Italian writings. His English Sonnets. § 10. SECOND PERIOD, 1640–1660:—Style of his prose writings. § 11. THIRD PERIOD, 1660–1674:—*Paradise Lost.* Analysis of the poem; its versification. § 12. Incidents and personages of the poem. Conduct and development of the plot. § 13. *Paradise Regained.* § 14. *Samson Agonistes.*

§ 1. ABOVE every figure of the seventeenth century, great or small, towers in solitary grandeur the sublime form of JOHN MILTON. It is no easy task to give even a cursory sketch of a life so crowded with literary as well as political activity. He was born in London on December 9th, 1608. His father's house was at the sign of the Spread Eagle in Bread Street, and his baptism took place at the neighbouring church of Allhallows. It is interesting to note that the great Republican poet came of an ancient and gentle stock, which had forfeited its Oxfordshire estates during the Wars of the Roses. His grandfather had been keeper of Shotover Forest, and when his son deserted his forefathers' religion, disinherited him. This son, the father of John Milton the poet, and himself another John, was an ardent Republican with strong leanings towards Puritanism, a skilled musician, and, so far as we know, an energetic and prosperous man. After his quarrel with his father, he had embraced the profession of a money-scrivener, in which, by industry and integrity, he made some money, and was able, in 1632, to retire to a pleasant country-house at Horton, not far from Colnbrook in Buckinghamshire. The poet's mother was Sarah Jeffrey, the daughter of a merchant tailor in the City. The boy evidently gave indications, from his early childhood, of the extraordinary intellectual powers which distinguished him from all other men; and his father, whose own culture was by no means small, aided his

JOHN MILTON (1608–1674).

His family.

Education.

genius by giving him a generous opportunity of study and leisurely preparation for his great career. He enjoyed the rare advantage of an education which trained him admirably for the profession of letters; and the proud care with which he collected all his youthful productions, his first verses and his college exercises, shows that he was well aware that of everything proceeding from his pen, "whether . . . prosing or versing, but chiefly by this latter, the style, by certain vital signs it had, was likely to live." What in other men would have been a pardonable vanity, in him was a duty he owed to his own genius and to posterity. He was most carefully educated, first at home, under the supervision of Thomas Young, who afterwards became Master of Jesus College, Cambridge. This is the *Thomas Junius*, to whom his fourth Latin elegy (1627) is dedicated. From his private tutor he went to St. Paul's School, and from thence, a child in years, but a consummate scholar, to Christ's College, Cambridge, which he entered on February 12th, 1625. Of his residence at Cambridge very little is known. There is a legend that, from his personal beauty, he was known as the "lady of the college"; and the mulberry tree which he planted is still one of the sights of Cambridge. He now and then refers to the University, and always with affection; and it was at Christ's that he made the acquaintance of Edward King, whose death he bewailed so magnificently in later years. Perhaps his most direct allusion to Cambridge is his short elegy on Hobson, the University carrier, a character well known both in Cambridge and in London—but this tells us nothing about himself. But there can be very little doubt that Mr. Chappell, his tutor, and the other dons who came into contact with him were infinitely delighted with his wonderfully precocious exercises and *prolusiones*. Dr. Johnson, seeking internal evidence in one of his Latin poems (the first, addressed to Diodati), evolved a groundless, if not improbable, story about rustication and flogging, and, on the slightest evidence, traced in his later writings a strong hostility to the University. However, he took his Bachelor's degree in 1629, and did not go out of residence until 1632, when he graduated as Master of Arts. This fact of itself shows very little hostility to the place, and the intensely academical spirit of all his work speaks volumes in contradiction of any occasional and obscure expression of distaste with the manner of his studies. His first attempts at poetry were made in his fifteenth year, while he was still at St. Paul's; and some of his finest, most characteristic, and most intellectual verse was written during his early years at Cambridge. The sublime *Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity* was begun on Christmas Day, 1629; and most of his shorter occasional pieces, including the wonderful *Verses at a Solemn Musick*, belong to his Cambridge period.

Residence at Cambridge.

On leaving Cambridge he resided for about six years at his

father's seat at Horton, continuing his multifarious studies with unabated and almost excessive ardour, and filling his mind with delight in the exquisite beauty of the country—that rural scenery of Windsor and Eton which has inspired so many poets, from Shakespeare to Mr. Swinburne, with the love of nature for its own sake. In this happy environment his studies seem to have embraced the whole circle of human knowledge; and, however we may wonder at the majesty of his genius, the extent of his acquirements is no less astonishing. To this period of his life belong the masque of *Comus* (1634), the elegy on King called *Lycidas* (1637), and the poems called *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, which contain descriptions very applicable to Buckinghamshire scenery. During this epoch his mental characteristic seems to have been his susceptibility to the highest emotions; but, judging from the internal indications of his work, these emotions were not incompatible in him with the severest purity of sentiment and the loftiest dignity of principle. Externally, he was the bodily image of his temperament, beautiful and seraphic in feature, not unlike the young Raffaelle, but in stature scarcely of the middle size. He relates with pride that he was remarkable for his corporal activity and his address in the use of the sword. During the whole of his life his appearance was noble and almost ideal; as time went on the childish beauty of his face was gradually exchanged for the lofty and sublime expression of sorrow which we know from the portraits of his blindness and old age. The type of his own angels when young, when old he was the type of a prophet, patriot, and saint.

Retirement at Horton.

§ 2. In 1638 the poet, who was now in his thirtieth year, set out upon his continental travels, which were then considered the finishing touch to a perfect education. He visited France, Switzerland, and the most celebrated of the Italian cities, and, being furnished with the best of introductions, was received everywhere with marked respect and admiration. "Joannes Miltonus, Anglus," as his admirers addressed him, seems to have struck the learned and fastidious Italians with unusual astonishment; and, wherever he went, the youthful poet gave proofs, "as the manner was," of his profound skill in Italian and Latin verse. It was a favourable moment for a visit to Italy; for the pontificate of the learned Urban VIII, although disturbed abroad by the Thirty Years' War, was highly favourable to Italian learning. Milton appears to have made the acquaintance of all who were most illustrious for learning and genius; he had an interview with Galileo, "grown old, a prisoner to the Inquisition"; and among his other friends was Giovanni Diodati, a theological professor and a member of a noble house which sprung originally from Lucca. This Giovanni was uncle to that Carlo Diodati to whom Milton addressed the first of his Latin elegies. Carlo's prose panegyric of his friend, "the new Ulysses,

Milton's travels.

Residence in Italy.

in whose memory was contained the whole world," still remains, and with it an elegiac distich from the illustrious pen of the Neapolitan Giambattista Manso, Marchese di Villa, the friend of Marino and Torquato Tasso. During his residence abroad the poet gave proofs, not only of his learning and genius, but also of his religious and political ardour, so hostile to Episcopacy and to the monarchical system; and although he had received at starting the prudent recommendation of the wise diplomatist Wotton to keep "i pensieri stretti ed il viso sciolto" (his thoughts close and his face open)—which Wotton himself had borrowed from an old Roman courtier—his zeal for his own form of opinion exposed him, at Rome and other places, to some inconvenience. But the real fruit of his journey remains in his Latin poems; and the proof of his friendships may be found, not only in his charming elegiac letter, written at a much earlier date to Diodati, but in the hexameters addressed to Manso and the scazons which he sent to the sick poet Salsillo. In Italian he wrote at least as well as the majority of contemporary poets—for, after Tasso's death, there arose no first-rate Italian poet—but in Latin verse his compositions have never been surpassed by any modern writer, and still bear close and critical reading.

Milton's Latin and Italian poetry.

§ 3. He spent about fifteen months abroad, and then was recalled abruptly to England by the first ominous signs of the war between King and Parliament. So fervent a Republican and so inveterate an enemy of Episcopacy was not likely to remain an inactive spectator of the momentous conflict; he threw himself into the struggle with all the ardour of his natural temperament and convictions. From this point (1639) we may watch the second phase of his career: we now see him as a most eloquent, but vehement and even furious controversialist—one of the most prolific writers of that epoch of agitation, producing works on all the burning questions of the day. He advocated, as might be expected, the establishment of Republican principles in the state, and waged an uncompromising warfare against the Church party in the kingdom. At first he sought to aid his small fortune by opening a school in Aldersgate Street; but among those who had the honour of his instructions the only two celebrated persons were his nephews Edward and John Phillips. These, the sons of his sister Anne, left several details respecting their uncle's life, and in other ways contributed to the history of English poetry. Milton's actual career as a prose writer began in the next year (1641) with his treatise, *Of Reformation touching Church Discipline in England*, and his defence of the five ministers whose counterblast in the same year to Bishop Hall's *Humble Remonstrance* was known as *Smectymnuus*. His controversial work, so successfully inaugurated, continued without interruption until the Restoration defeated all his hopes, and left him, in blindness, poverty and danger, with

Return to England and entrance into controversy.

nothing but the consciousness of the sincerity of his convictions, and the leisure to devote the closing years of his life to the composition of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*.

His writings in defence of *Smectymnuus* were directed against the Anglican Church. It should not be forgotten that his violence led him to attack, not merely the large and influential party represented by Laud, but the moderate and almost Puritan views of men like Hall, whose theological position, apart from the episcopal question, was identical with Milton's own austere creed. But, in the midst of these struggles, he turned aside to take an active part in agitating a very important question which concerned the law of divorce. Some of the pamphlets of 1644 and 1645, including the famous *Tetrachordon*, were doubtless suggested by his own private affairs. He had been married in 1643 to Mary Powell, the daughter of an Oxfordshire squire of Royalist sympathies. It is said that this gentleman had borrowed large sums of money from Milton's father, and, being unable to repay them, had probably sought an easy way out of his difficulties by allowing his daughter to make an unsuitable and unpromising match. However, it is hardly likely that the discipline of a Puritan household, in which the elder Milton was now living, would have proved very attractive to a girl of any spirit; and it is not surprising to find that she soon returned home. In the interval appeared the treatises on divorce. However, in 1645, the ruin of the Royalist cause and the financial distress of her father, who had taken refuge in besieged Oxford, brought her back to her husband. He forgave her; but, although three daughters were the fruit of their union, the rest of their married life was probably not very happy. Later in life he made two more experiments in marriage, but these must have been attempted rather from a desire for a housekeeper than from love. In 1644, while his works on divorce were appearing, he wrote his *Areopagitica*, an oration after the antique model, in which he addressed Parliament in defence of the liberty of the press. This and his tractate, *Of Education*, also a work belonging to this same busy year, remain the best known and most widely read of his prose writings. The *Areopagitica* is the most sublime piece of pleading achieved in any age or country on behalf of its great principle, freedom of thought and opinion. Here, as in many other of his tracts, Milton rises to an almost superhuman pitch of eloquence. It was somewhere about this time, too, that he began, with considerable pains, his *History of England*, which, published in 1670, comprised six short books, and covered a period from the earliest times down to the Norman Conquest.

Matrimonial troubles. "Tetrachordon."

Publication of "Areopagitica," etc.

§ 4. In 1647 his father died; and, during all this period, his own movements seem to have been very restless. He removed

from house to house, carrying his small and not very flourishing school with him. But, in 1649, occurred the event of his life—his appointment as Latin secretary to the Council of State. In this post his skill as a writer of Latin was employed in carrying on the diplomatic intercourse between the Republican Government and the European Powers, for at this time such correspondence was always carried on in Latin, the *lingua franca* of diplomatists. In after years, when he had lost his sight, he was joined in these duties, first by a man named Weckherlin, then by Philip Meadows, and afterwards by the excellent and accomplished Marvell. His sight failed him altogether in 1652, but the weakness which caused it had been gradually coming on for ten years. His eyes, even from early youth, had been delicate; and, in his intense devotion to study, he had greatly overtasked them. In one of his noblest sonnets (the nineteenth in most editions) he alludes, with lofty self-consciousness and pious resignation, to his blindness, which he proudly attributes to his exertions on behalf of truth and liberty; and, in the character of the blinded Samson, he undoubtedly shadows forth his personal infirmity and his reflections upon it.

Appointment as Latin secretary.

Milton's blindness.

Connected with Milton's high position in the Protectorate are passages, both in prose and verse, in which he expresses his sympathy with the administration and personal qualities of Cromwell; but his eulogy, although warm and enthusiastic, is free from every trace of flattery. It is probable that, while he disapproved of the despotic and military character of the Protector's rule, he gave in his adherence to it as the least out of a large selection of evils, and pardoned some of the unavoidable severities of a revolutionary government, in consideration of the benefits which it brought and of the patriotism which it fostered. He must, at all events, have been pleased to aid Cromwell in his successful efforts to raise the nation to the head of European affairs, and in his strongly Protestant policy.

His relations with Cromwell.

His views on the King's execution are clearly shown in his *Iconoclastes* (1649) and his three *Defensiones contra Salmasium*, which are the fruit of his greatest controversy. The misfortunes and tragic death of Charles I naturally excited in the minds of contemporary sovereigns something of that horror and alarm which was afterwards caused by the murder of Louis XVI. Claude de Saumaise, or Salmasius, as the name was Latinised, was one of the most learned men of the day, and was a professor at Leyden in Holland. Charles II, who happened to be hiding in the Netherlands, employed this scholar to write a heavy Latin pamphlet, invoking the vengeance of Heaven upon the Parliament of England. This book, the *Defensio Regis*, published in the November after Charles' death, was answered

The Salmasian controversy.

by Milton in 1651 with the *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano*, followed in 1654 by the *Defensio Secunda*, and in 1655 by the *Pro Se Defensio*. In these works, the second and third of which were directed against a new antagonist, Alexander More, professor of Greek at Middelburg, he maintains the right and justifies the action of the English people in making war upon, dethroning, and decapitating their King, on the ground of his attempts to infringe the Constitution. Milton's invectives are not less violent—they are, in fact, very stupid and abusive—than those of Saumaise, More, and More's friend Du Moulin; his Latinity, it goes without saying, is not less elegant; but the controversy does honour to neither party. Literary warfare was in those days coarse and ferocious; and, in their vehemence of mutual vituperation, these two great scholars descended to weak and vulgar personalities whose exquisite Latinity forms but a poor excuse for brutal violence.

Milton's prose style: its involved construction.

The subjects of Milton's prose writings, for the most part, had only a temporary interest; and their style, whether Latin or English, is adequately represented by the works already mentioned. It has a wonderful power, grandeur, and picturesqueness, but its colossal and elaborate involution cannot but put it above the reach of most readers. It is emphatically not an English prose style; it is merely a wonderful and eloquent hybrid, borrowing its forms and constructions from Greek and Latin sources, using Latin words in preference to Saxon, and altogether applying the sonority of Latin, as far as possible, to an uncouth and primarily dissimilar tongue. With all his burning eloquence Milton is not nearly so English a writer as Hooker or Jeremy Taylor; the homely diction of Fuller is even nearer the real language. If Milton amazes and even convinces us, he never makes us feel sympathy; and, even in his poetry, we rank him with Virgil and Dante, foreign poets, rather than with Shakespeare and Spenser. Among his prose works, however, we should refer to the pamphlet generally called the *Apology for Smectymnuus* (1642). The pamphlet which he defended owes its curious name to an anagram composed on the initials of its five authors, one of whom (discernible in the *ty*) was Thomas Young, Milton's early tutor, then Puritan chaplain at Hamburg. Then there is the *Iconoclastes* of 1649, which, as its name shows, was intended to neutralise the effect of the famous *Icon Basilike*. The *Icon*, which was in all probability what it professed to be—the work of the King himself—represented Charles' sufferings, piety, and resignation so vividly that, more than anything else, it excited public commiseration on his behalf. Its literary merits are not extraordinary, but, while it retained its hold on English people, Milton's opposing pamphlet was and is almost forgotten. Other treatises, among which may be mentioned *The Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty* (1641), and *The*

Prose works.

Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth (1659), sufficiently exhibit in their titles the nature of their subjects. What is now most interesting to us in these controversial writings of Milton is the astonishing grandeur of eloquence to which he occasionally rises in outbursts of enthusiasm intermingled with drier matter; and, next to this, we are attracted by the notices of his own personal feelings, studies, and mode of life, which he has left here and there in his eagerness to defend himself against calumnious attacks on his moral character. Thus his *Apology for Smectymnuus* and his pamphlet against "Prelaty" contain a singularly fine epitome of his studies, projects, and literary aspirations. The only work which remains to be noticed, beside those already enumerated, is the curious tract, *Of Education*. In this Milton has drawn up a beautiful, but entirely Utopian, scheme for remodelling the whole system of training and reducing it to something like the antique pattern. He proposes the entire abolition of the present system of school and university; he would bring up young men with as much attention to physical as to intellectual development; and, in doing this, he would use a mechanism borrowed from the *prytaneia* of the ancient Greeks—public institutions in which instruction should have an encyclopædic character, and all the arts, trades, and sciences should be taught, so as to produce sages, patriots, and soldiers. This treatise, we have already said, was published in 1644.

Autobiographical element in his prose writings.

§ 5. With the Restoration, in 1660, begins the last, the most gloomy, and yet the most glorious period of the great poet's career. With this event came a warning of distress and persecution to the pamphleteer who had written himself down the most consistent, persevering, and formidable enemy of monarchy and Episcopacy, and had attacked, with a particular and almost spiteful vehemence, the character of Charles I. Although those who had taken any share in the trial and execution of the King were excepted from the general amnesty, Milton was only imprisoned, and was liberated after a confinement of some months. The indulgence with which he was treated may be attributed either to consideration for his learning, poverty, and blindness, or, perhaps, to the intercession of some who knew how to appreciate his virtues and genius. It is said that Sir William D'Avenant successfully used his influence to spare him any further persecution. From this period till his death he lived in close retirement, for a short time in Holborn, and then in Jewin Street, busily occupied in the composition of his great epics. *Paradise Lost*, after having been his principal employment for seven years, was finished in 1665, and published in 1667. *Paradise Regained*, a much shorter work, was published, with the noble tragedy of *Samson Agonistes*, in 1671. On November 8th, 1674, Milton died, at the age of 66.

Milton's life after the Restoration.

Publication of "Paradise Lost," etc.

This event took place at his house in Artillery Walk, Bunhill Fields. He was buried beside his father in Cripplegate. He had been married three times. His daughters by Mary Powell survived him, and are said to have treated him in his old age with harshness and disrespect. There is a tradition of his having employed them to read and write to him under his dictation—irksome drudgery to them, for there are documents extant which prove them to have been almost entirely without education. He married a second wife, Catharine Woodcock of Hackney, in 1656: this union was far more suitable than the first; but, two years after, his wife died in child-bed, and with her died the infant. His third marriage took place in 1663: his wife this time was Elizabeth Minshull, a member of a Cheshire family, and was much younger than the poet, whom she survived.

Death of Milton.

All through his life Milton's domestic relations were unfortunate. Essentially a student and a devotee of the hard Puritan order, he combined predilections and prejudices which are fatal to social life. His life, after his early years, was not happy: blindness, poverty, and misfortune, the shattering of all his cherished hopes for the State and religion, attacked him at one and the same time. His temper was not always sweet; he was too violent a partisan for charity; he was not especially lovable, and, in later years, he seems to have made few friends. He was infinitely earnest, and, like most people who are very much in earnest, had a small sense of humour. He professed the narrowest form of religion: his conscience led him to assent to political crimes: his very scruples led him astray. But his faults were magnificent: his want of humour only increased the majesty of his style: his religion taught him the immense conception of *Paradise Lost*: he defended his conscience and scruples with an audacious sincerity. He has been vilified and abused from time to time by those who think the murder of Charles I allied to the unpardonable sin: he has been deified by those who choose to regard Cromwell as the incarnation of sovereignty and religion: his reputation has been mangled and torn by partisans more bitter even than himself. But through his writings shines the true character of the man: his purity, nobility, his convictions, his high ideals, his love to God, and his pity for fallen man, are evident and cannot be mistaken. Of all English poets he is the most pure, the most sublime, the most unearthly. There are others more directly religious, but there is none who leaves the earth so far behind as he "that rode sublime upon the seraph-wings of Ecstasy."

His character.

§ 6. Milton's literary career divides itself into three great periods—his youth, his manhood, and his old age. The first of these, speaking roughly, extends from 1623 to 1640; the second from 1640 to 1660; and the third from the Restoration to the poet's death in 1674. During

His poems: 1. Poems of his youth.

the first, he produced the larger body of his miscellaneous poetry, including verses of a very tender and graceful character; during the second, he was chiefly occupied with his prose writings, whose invigorating effect and serious, exalted style lead on to the occupation of the third period, the slow and elaborate composition of *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, and *Samson Agonistes*. Finally, the characteristic of the early epoch is grace; in the middle epoch we recognise force and vehemence; in the last, an almost unapproachable sublimity.

In the early, almost boyish poems—the *Verses at a Solemn Musick*, the poetical exercises written at school and college, and the *Hymn on the Nativity*—there are, it is at once obvious, certain qualities of thought and expression which distinguish Milton from all other poets. Chief among them is that majesty of conception which, in Dante, was not free from harshness and ruggedness, but, in Milton, is combined with consummate harmony and grace. The austerity, however, remains in a modified but still remarkable form, the result of his Puritan cast of thought, whose stamp nothing could efface in his works. In addition, these poems, occasional and sometimes trivial although their subjects are, display a scholarship so vast and complete that it would have overwhelmed and crushed a power of original conception less mighty than Milton's. Above all, even in the least elaborate of his poems, there is always present that solemn, full melody which made a later poet address him as the "God-gifted organ-voice of England." His music, indeed, rolls in a long succession of mighty chords from beginning to end of his work, sounding out the most astonishing and bewildering combinations of phrase. There is no poet whose imagery is so various and profuse, and yet so admirably designed to work in harmony towards the general meaning and effect. The construction of the *Hymn on the Nativity* is a case in point—it is wonderfully artful and well connected. Image crowds into the mind after image, fact after fact. First, there are the prefatory stanzas, describing the peace of the world at Christ's birth. Then, having thus engendered a "solemn stillness," in which the pealing notes of his triumphant music sink to a whisper, he transfers it to the night of the Nativity—to the silent winds, the noiseless lapping of the waves, the "steadfast gaze" of the stars—whispering gently and more gently until the shepherds' voices, "simply chatting in a rustic row," break in upon the hushed air. Immediately follow the angelic voices rising in a great *crescendo*, until, with one united crash of the "crystal spheres," the vast perspective of Heaven is disclosed, and cherubim and seraphim burst into the harmony of the Redeemer's cradle-song. Amid their joyful strain the mind is filled with dreams and visions of the Golden Age, rising and falling with the heavenly melody, embracing æons in their grasp,

"Verses at a Solemn Musick," and "Hymn on the Nativity."

Construction of the "Nativity."

and heralding, in this first day of man's happiness, the last day, and the destruction of earth and sin. And as the angels' song dies away and the dawn of Christmas Day grows in the East, we hear the distant wailing of nations, the heathen and their gods, blinded and cast down by the new strange light which breaks over the head of the incarnate Lord. They disappear, "flocking shadows," in the cold wind which announces the break of day; and, turning from these wild discords, in which the clash of cymbals and drums blends with the antiquated chant of priests and the dancing of worshippers round wreathed altars, the song finishes in a gentle minor key beside the new-born Babe, hushing itself in His sleep. This magnificent ode is a fitting prelude to *Paradise Lost*: its style is in no way different. As time went on, Milton's learning may have grown, but the "grand style" of his earlier and later years was not very different: the sublimity of the *Nativity Hymn* has no rival in any part of his work.

"Comus" (1634).

We have already spoken of that peculiar and fanciful entertainment called the Masque, which was so common in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I, and had been brought to the perfection of a fine art by many poets and dramatists, but in particular by Ben Jonson, and once by Shakespeare himself in *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Milton proved himself in no way behind his predecessors. In the elegance and refinement of this half dramatic, half lyric kind of composition, he was their equal: in loftiness and purity of sentiment he far surpassed all save Shakespeare. Ben Jonson and the rest had exhausted their courtly and scholarly fancy in praising princes and noblemen who were not the models of their time, and debasing the coin of their genius by stamping it with unworthy heads and fulsome inscriptions. The masque was thus little more than a vehicle for neat and far-fetched adulation. Milton used it to convey ethical lessons—not merely superficial moralities, but high abstract imaginations. The "Mask of *Comus*" was "presented at Ludlow Castle, 1634, before the Earl of Bridgewater, then President of Wales." The Earl was an accomplished nobleman, and one of the most powerful personages of the time; his office was to act as viceroy on the Welsh frontier; and the splendid castle of Ludlow, one of the finest and strongest of medieval fortresses, was his residence. Its romantic neighbourhood, now, as then, wooded and rocky, was at that time a huge forest, out of which rose the tall hill of Ludlow with the town, church, and castle on its summit. The legend is that Lord Bridgewater's daughter, Lady Alice Egerton, with two of her brothers, lost her way in the forest, and so suggested the subject of the masque. The story, on the other hand, may have grown out of the poem; at all events, it gives us scenery which can still be appreciated; and the actors in the piece were the two young gentlemen and

Its representation.

Lady Alice. The part of the Attendant Spirit was taken by Milton's friend, Henry Lawes, a musician who had studied in Italy and was the composer of the music accompanying the lyric portion of the masque. Lawes' part in the play is alluded to in line 84 of the piece, when the Spirit ends his prologue by explaining that he has exchanged his celestial trappings for the clothes of Lawes and, as he delicately hints, the livery of the house of Bridgewater. It was Lawes who contrived to get the poem written, as he acknowledges in his dedicatory preface to Lord Brackley, the son of his patron; and, somewhere about this time, Milton seems to have recognised his generous offices in a very commendatory sonnet, in which he gives Lawes' very charming airs a much higher place than posterity has assigned to them. The characters of the masque are few. There is the lady with her two brothers; there is the Attendant Spirit; and there is Comus, a wicked enchanter who is the allegorical representative of vicious and sensual pleasure. The plot is exceedingly simple, and lyric rather than dramatic; for the delineation of passion has no part in the poet's plan, and the abstract and ideal nature of the *dramatis personæ*, their intentional lack of flesh and blood, is of itself a device calculated to raise the mind of the reader or spectator into the pure atmosphere of philosophical and Platonic beauty. Dialogue is used with an inexpressibly noble result, although, considered merely as dialogue, it is not a great success. Each speech forms, so to speak, an exquisite soliloquy setting forth, in pure and musical eloquence, lofty and abstract ideals. The poem combines that severe and statuesque classical grace which we expect to meet everywhere in Milton, with an unrestrained sense of natural beauty; its Hellenic rhythm, its Platonic philosophy, is leavened with that quality which, most of all, brings back to our minds the dramatic poets—Ben Jonson, Fletcher, and Shakespeare. While the dialogue itself has a lyrical form, it is interspersed with songs of consummate melody—for instance, the drinking chorus of Comus' rout, the song "Sweet Echo," and the recitatives of the Attendant Spirit. Milton may have used English models, such as Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess* and Jonson's masques and fragment of a pastoral drama; but the cast of his work is altogether colder and more foreign. The *Aminta* of Tasso, the *Pastor Fido* of Guarini, and the *Adone* of Marino are its real sources; Milton's genius simply took their insipid and conventional pastoral and gave it a new colour. In his lines to Manso he mentions Tasso and Marino with much appreciation; and, altogether, we may be certain that he preferred their scholarly work with its genial purity to the constantly licentious and not always very cultivated model set him by the English dramatists. At the same time, Jonson and Fletcher themselves owed a great

Henry Lawes.

Plot and construction of "Comus."

Its debt to the Italian pastoral.

deal to Tasso, and Fletcher's work always shows a strong tendency to the Italian type of literary model. If they show a more exuberant lyrical feeling, they have none of the calmness and dignity of Milton, who, in this respect, surpasses all poets. It is this perpetual serenity and evenness which makes Milton something of a stumbling-block in the reader's way: sometimes, in *Comus*, there is a very narrow line between it and frigidity. The student of these early poems knows, however, that, beneath this smooth exterior, there is a mine of beauty, both of phrase and thought, in which the careful searcher may discover inexhaustible supplies. We have still another fragment written by Milton in this manner—

The "Arcades."

the *Arcades*, performed before Lady Derby at Harefield by various members of her family. His poetry, however, has but a very small share in this masque, for most of the entertainment was made up, according to custom, of dances, music, and scenic transformations. Although Milton's portion is comparatively small, it exhibits all his usual characteristics.

§ 7. The pastoral elegy entitled *Lycidas* was written in memory of Milton's friend and fellow-student Edward King, drowned in the Irish Channel in 1637, while crossing from Chester to visit his friends and relatives. His virtues and accomplishments were great, and he had intended to take Holy Orders. Here again, in the general tone of the poem, we easily trace the influence of Milton's favourite Italian models, with whose scholarlike spirit and elaborate diction he was so deeply saturated. The irregular, ever-varying, musical measure of the verse proclaims it to be a *canzone* of which the greatest poets of Italy might well have been proud. We may safely say that, since the occasional short *canzoni* of Petrarch and the series of delicate poems which occur at intervals throughout Boccaccio's work, European literature has never been enriched with so masterly a song as this gentle dirge. Throughout the poem we meet with a mixture of rural description, classical and mythological allegory, and allusions borrowed from Christian theology; and nothing is more singular than the skill with which the poet has combined elements apparently so discordant into one harmonious whole. The reader feels no shock at the apparent incongruities of the piece; the allusions are, in the first place, extremely numerous and various, and the whole poem has a very abstract air of poetical licence; the transitions are managed with great art; and the attention is continually diverted by the exquisite descriptions of natural scenery, flowers, and the famous rivers immortalised by the great poets of antiquity. Even if it is surprising to find St. Peter appearing among the sea-nymphs, and Milton's objections to the Anglican system brought into connection with the fables of pagan mythology, it must be owned that the Prince of the Apostles and controversial theology make, in this dress, a

"Lycidas" (1637).

very appropriate figure in a poem whose form is pagan with the paganism of the Renaissance. And, in the force of imagination and the perpetual beauty of imagery which is displayed from beginning to end, the sensitive reader forgets the logical exceptions made by his reason. Here, too, we realise how great a mastery Milton possessed over all the melody of which the English language is capable. From a solemn and psalm-like grandeur to the lightest delicacy and playfulness, every variety of music may be found in *Lycidas*. It is one more example of the truth proved by Surrey, and Spenser, and Shakespeare, that our harsh and rugged Northern speech may be made to echo the softest melody of the Italian lyre.

§ 8. The two descriptive poems, *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, are a pair of cabinet pictures, the one the complement and counterpart of the other. They are of nearly the same length, written in the same metre, and consisting, with the exception of a few longer and irregular lines of invocation at the beginning of each, of the short-rhymed octosyllabic measure. *L'Allegro* (*i.e.* the cheerful man) is a picture of scenery, occupations, and amusements seen, to use our homely metaphor, through rose-coloured spectacles. *Il Penseroso* represents the moody temperament engaged in looking at objects of the same kind. The idea is eminently artificial; but, through the medium of these poems, composed, in all probability, in the pleasant retirement of his father's Buckinghamshire house, we see something of the poet's two-sided personality—cheerful without frivolity, and melancholy without despondency. The strong parallelism between the two pieces may be studied in detail by the curious reader. The opening of *L'Allegro*, banishing Melancholy to her "Cimmerian desert," corresponds to the exile of "vain, deluding joys" at the beginning of *Il Penseroso*. Conversely, the invocation of Joy in the one corresponds to the sublime impersonation of Melancholy in the other, whose wonderful details could be transferred to stone by no lesser artist than Michael Angelo. The cheerful disciple of Euphrosyne is greeted in the morning by the lark, the cock, and the hunter's horn, and takes his timely walk "by hedgerow elms on hillocks green" to see the sunrise "robed in flames and amber light." The passage following the sunrise—the sights and sounds of early morning, the gradual unfolding of the landscape under the growing radiance—is an important chapter in the literature of natural beauty. This is succeeded by a charming picture of rustic life and of a village festival, in which every line seems to keep time with the "merry bells" and "jocund rebecks." The day ends in ghost-stories and fairy-tales, related round the farm-house fire, to an accompaniment of "nut-brown ale." From this picture of rural pleasures ("the hounds and horn" are but heard afar off as they "cheerly rouse the slumbering morn") we pass to the more courtly and studied pastimes of a great city—the tour-

"L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso."

Analysis of "L'Allegro"

nament, the marriage-feast, and the drama. Milton here takes occasion to praise Jonson and Shakespeare, and then passes, by a natural transition, to one of the most admirable of the many passages in which he celebrated and exemplified the charms of music, terminating his poem with the praise of his favourite art. He had inherited his father's passion and talent for music; and afterwards, in his poverty and blindness, it was his best, and perhaps his highest, consolation. Certainly no poet in any language has so plainly shown his intense susceptibility to its charm. The passage in *L'Allegro* is the most perfect representation in words of the execution of that quaint and melodious Italian music which inspired, not only a lesser genius like Lawes, but the greatest English master of instrumental and vocal music, Henry Purcell. But in *Il Penseroso*, instead of all this cheerful walking in the bright dawn and loitering in villages till sundown, we find the poet walking—

Analysis of "Il Penseroso."

> "Unseen
> On the dry smooth-shaven green,
> To behold the wandering moon,
> Riding near her highest noon."

The sounds he hears are no longer the song of the lark or the whistling of the peasant, but the "even-song" of the nightingale, and the "far-off curfew" resounding across the fens. He meditates over the glowing embers in "some still removëd place," or passes the long watches of the night in penetrating the mysteries of philosophy, or reading ancient tragedy, or in poring over chivalrous legends. His mornings are by preference cloudy and damp: he eschews the noonday sun and walks in the deep recesses of some fairy-haunted forest, or rests beside a brook where his imagination is kindled to hear mysterious music. The final pleasure he demands from his mistress Melancholy is a cloister or a hermitage where he may live with her.

No analysis can give any idea of what anthologists used to call the "beauties" of these poems. There is hardly an aspect of external nature, beautiful and sublime, terrible and peaceful, which is not expressed or suggested here—sometimes in that condensed, sketchy form which, in its infinite pregnancy, is so characteristic of the highest poetry. Whole pictures are expressed in a single word; as, for example, the "dappled dawn"; the hill "hoar" with the floating mists of dawn; the "fallows grey"; the towers of the ancient manor "*bosomed* high in tufted trees"; the "*tanned* haycock"; the "peasants dancing in the chequered shade." Again, the whole description of Melancholy in *Il Penseroso* is an extraordinary instance of the power of words, which would be marred by selection: the song of the nightingale "smoothing the rugged brow of night" comes to us as a revelation, as the exact expression of what we have felt ourselves. The picture of

Pictorial richness of the two poems.

the "wandering moon . . . stooping through a fleecy cloud" once more puts our wordless sensation into a definite shape, binding it to us by an exquisite and final formula. Images, mental and visual, pass before us in an endless train: the glowing embers that "teach light to counterfeit a gloom"; Tragedy "sweeping by in sceptred pall"; the "iron tears" drawn down the cheek of Pluto by the song of Orpheus; the "minute drops" falling as the shower passes away; the "high-embowëd roof" and "storied windows" of a Gothic cathedral, with their "dim religious light"—all these phrases stamp for us the finest, if some of the commonest impressions of life; and yet all have their soul concentrated in one single word. To enumerate all the pictures contained in these two poems would be to transcribe them word for word: but perhaps the finest thing in either is the passage which describes the curfew sounding—

> "Over some wide-watered shore,
> Swinging low with sullen roar."

Anyone who has even the dullest imagination must see at once, from the slow trochaic movement of the lines, how the whole scene and the sound itself spring up before us with minute and manifold suggestion. It is the suggestive character of *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* which makes them so admirable. The reader can never forget the impression which their detail leaves upon him. But the general scheme of the poems is not very valuable, and savours too much of that juvenile affectation and ambitious simplicity which was the bane of Italian poetry after Tasso's time. Often, as some image in *Il Penseroso* reveals itself to us more clearly than ever before, we are met by the contrast between the outward pose affected by the poet and the unstudied and natural sublimity of his thought. The poems are, indeed, rare and priceless pictures in a comparatively worthless frame. But, in a better setting, their intrinsic value would probably have been less.

Character of Milton's Latin poetry.

§ 9. In this connection we may glance at Milton's experiments in Latin and Italian verse, which doubtless went a long distance towards shaping the form of his English poetry, and belong entirely to his youth. In the happiness with which he has copied and reproduced the style of classical and antique poets, Milton has no rival among the modern writers of Latin verse. Not even Buchanan, and far less Johannes Secundus and his school, have attained a more perfect purity of expression, or—a far more important and difficult matter—have so completely assimilated antique thought without spoiling their work by the intrusion of modern ideas. He not only writes like Tibullus and Propertius; he feels as they felt: we never meet with modern sentiments incongruously masquerading in classical costume. Still, as was remarked above, Milton's type of thought was invariably so

classical that it transformed modern subjects into its own shape with a most deceptive ease. We have already referred to the epistles addressed to his friends, the delightful letter addressed to young Carlo Diodati, and the lines to Manso, which, apart from their soft and fluent rhythm, are interesting from the fact that they contain Milton's project of an epic upon King Arthur. The personal and intimate character of these verses brings us nearer to the thoughts, tastes, and individual occupations of the poet. They are totally free from any likeness to a *cento* or *pasticcio*; they have not that air of the *Gradus* or any other artificial help which is the prevailing defect of modern Latin poetry: their author thinks and feels and writes with ease in the language which he employs. In many passages, too, of these poems, we meet with striking examples of Milton's wonderful power of conception: his splendid verses, *In Quintum Novembris* (*i.e.* for November 5th), are full of lofty images which give us a foretaste of *Paradise Lost*. His Italian poems consist of a *canzone* and a few sonnets written in faithful imitation of Petrarch; but, while he uses his metre with a fine freedom, we feel that these are nothing more than experiments, and that their thought does not run very easily.

His Italian poetry.

As a writer of sonnets it would, of course, be unjust to try Milton by the standard of these Italian poems; and, even among the English sonnets, there are one or two whose elephantine playfulness makes us blush for the poet's want of humour—a defect which he usually took some pains to conceal. But those which remain are of that lofty, grave, and solemn character which was most congenial to his spirit. Their position in the very interesting history of the English sonnet is curious. The Elizabethan poets, so far as form was concerned, had followed their own sweet will, and rhymed their sonnets as they chose; their style was, however, manifestly, although never slavishly, Italian. Milton, correct even to pedantry, rhymed and constructed his sonnets on the correct Italian type; their form is as faultless as Petrarch's. But nothing is less Italian than his matter and his style. Macaulay has observed the difference between Petrarch's and Milton's method of expression. It is certainly curious that Milton, full of conceits and allusions at other times and in other forms of verse, should have adopted this essentially artificial and affected vehicle for his most personal and least embellished thoughts. Macaulay has compared these sonnets to the collects of the Anglican Liturgy: they do not deal with love, but with religion, patriotism, and domestic affection. The finest are as follows: I. *To the Nightingale;* VIII. *When the Assault was Intended to the City;* XIII. *To Mr. H. Lawes on his Airs*, another of those splendid passages in praise of music; XVI. *To the Lord General Cromwell*, recapitulating the chief victories of that captain; XVIII. *On the Late Massacre in*

The Miltonic sonnet.

Piedmont, ascribed to the year 1655 ; XIX. *On his Blindness*, the most sublime of all the series ; XX. *To Mr. Lawrence*, an invitation to a friend, describing the pleasures of a "neat repast of Attic taste," and resembling, with certain differences, Horace's "Martiis cœlebs quid agam Kalendis" ; XXII. *To Cyriac Skinner*, containing another utterance on his blindness, full of pious resignation and patriotism—neither of a common order, but deeply tinged with that awful spirit of courage and infinite endurance which is not the least distinction of this great and unsurpassed genius. Lastly, in the twenty-third and last sonnet, which bears a distant and somewhat general resemblance to certain passages in Dante's *Vita Nuova*, and will fully bear a comparison with the famous *Levòmmi il mio pensier* of Petrarch, he describes a dream or vision of his second wife, lost to him early in their wedlock and deeply lamented.

§ 10. The second period of Milton's literary life is filled with political and religious controversy. In the very voluminous prose works belonging to this epoch we see at once the ardour of his convictions, the loftiness of his personal character, and the force and grandeur of his genius. They form the intellectual link between his youthful poems and his mature epics ; and those who are unacquainted with them not only miss a stage in the development of his genius, but are utterly incapable of forming any idea of his entire personality. Whether written in Latin or in English, these productions bear the ineffaceable stamp of their author's mind. They are crowded with vast and abstruse erudition, and all their learning is fused, as it were, into a burning mass by the fervour of enthusiasm. We have already said something of their style and of its weighty and ornate magnificence. It must not, however, be imagined that, because their thought is un-English, these pamphlets are in any sense unreadable. They are, like every masterpiece of eloquent and heavy-laden style, difficult reading, but they are never pedantic and cumbrous. At intervals their manner becomes almost supernatural, when they burst out into the supreme eloquence of piety and patriotism, "a sevenfold chorus of halleluiahs and harping symphonies" ; or when, harassed by calumny, he unfolds in majestic periods his studies, labours, and literary aspirations. No prose style ever presented so hopeless a subject for imitation ; no disciple could ever hope to borrow the immense length and involution of the sentences, or marshal his own style in step with its measured, professional tread. Even when writing in English, Milton seems to think in Latin, constantly using Latin inversions and words of Roman origin ; and this is the quality which has made the ordinary reader a stranger to his prose. In this peculiarity of style he was still guided by Italian preferences : the great Italian historians, like Guicciardini, formed their style in imitation of Livy ; while the writers of dialogues modelled themselves

2. Prose and controversial period : alliance between Milton's prose and his poetry.

almost slavishly on the philosophical and rhetorical treatises of Cicero. Milton's prose is rather that of Quintilian, rejoicing in freedoms forbidden by the strictly classical authors, and manifesting the real suppleness of Latin. To repeat what we said a little earlier in this chapter, the finest of these tracts, or, at least, the most interesting to the literary student, are the *Areopagitica*, the *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano* and the *Defensio Secunda*, the *Reasons for Church Government urged against Prelaty*, the *Apology for Smectymnuus*, and the treatise, *Of Education*.

3. Epic poetry of Milton's later life.

§ 11. No spectacle in literary history is more affecting and sublime than the picture of Milton, blind, poor, persecuted, and solitary, "fallen upon evil days and evil tongues, with dangers and with darkness compassed round," and retiring into obscurity to compose the immortal epics which have placed him among the greatest poets of all time. He approached his task with a calm confidence which was the fruit of long meditation, profound study, and fervent prayer, approving himself by this preparation the last of the four great epic poets of the world. Homer is the representative of the boyhood of the human race, Virgil of its manhood. These two, between them, typify the glory and greatness of the pagan world, as exhibited beneath its two most splendid forms—the heroic age of Greece, and the Augustan age of the Roman empire. Christianity opens a new era in the history of mankind, and finds its Homer and Virgil in Dante and Milton, the greatest of all Christian religious poets, and representatives of the two most brilliant phases of European literature. Dante typifies the logical, concrete, and systematic side of Christianity—Catholicism with its Aristotelian formulas; Milton represents its speculative, abstract, and inductive side—the Platonic theories of Protestantism. The philosophical difference which lies between the two opposing parties in the Christian world can never be seen more clearly than in this comparison between the two epic poets. Dante's work is marked throughout by a predominant intensity, which seeks aid from material and comprehensible parallels; Milton's chief characteristic is a sublimity which is enhanced by a general vagueness and immensity of comparison. Dante leaves nothing to the imagination; he fills in his picture with an exact accuracy, painting ideal objects in colours which translate them into reality: Milton courts his reader's imagination, throwing an ideal mist round real objects.

Analysis of "Paradise Lost."

Paradise Lost, originally composed in ten books or cantos, was afterwards re-divided into twelve. The actual composition —for the work had doubtless been meditated for years—occupied about seven years; that is, from 1658 to 1665. The following rapid analysis of the poem is condensed from Milton's own arguments, which are prefixed to the various cantos. In Book I, after

the exordium giving the general scheme of the work and invoking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is described the council of Satan and the infernal angels, their determination to oppose the designs of God in the creation of the earth and the innocence of our first parents, and the erection of Pandemonium, the palace of Satan. Book II continues the debates of the evil spirits; Satan consents to undertake the enterprise of temptation, and makes a journey to the gates of Hell, which he finds guarded by Sin and Death. We are transported in Book III to Heaven, where God the Son offers Himself as a propitiation for the foreseen disobedience of Adam. At line 416 we return to Satan, who enquires the road to the newly created Earth of Uriel, the angel of the Sun, and, following it, descends upon earth disguised as an angel of light. Book IV brings him within sight of Paradise, where Adam and Eve are living in a state of innocence. The angels set a guard over Eden, and Satan is arrested while endeavouring to tempt Eve in a dream, but is allowed to escape. In Book V Eve relates her dream to Adam; he comforts her, and, after their morning prayer, they proceed to their daily employment. They are visited by the angel Raphael, sent to warn them; and he relates to Adam the story of the revolt of Satan and the disobedient angels. This narrative is continued in Book VI, in which Raphael narrates the triumph of the Son over the rebellious spirits; and in Book VII, he proceeds, at Adam's request, to tell the history of the creation of the world. Adam, in Book VIII, pursues his conference with the angel, and describes his own state and recollections, his meeting with Eve, and their union. Then follows the book of the temptation, Book IX—first of Eve, and then of Adam. The Son, in Book X, judges and delivers sentence upon Adam and Eve, who are instructed to clothe themselves. Satan, triumphant, returns to Pandemonium, over a causeway which Sin and Death have made from Earth to Hell through Chaos; but, having recounted his success, is transformed with all his angels into serpents. Meanwhile, Adam and Eve bewail their fault, and determine to implore pardon. Book XI relates the acceptance of Adam's repentance by the Almighty, who, nevertheless, commands his expulsion from Paradise, and sends the angel Michael to reveal to him the consequences of his transgression. Eve laments her exile from Eden, and Michael shows Adam in a vision the destiny of man before the Flood. This prophetic picture is continued in Book XII with the history of the fate of humanity from the Flood onwards. Adam is comforted by the assurance of the Redemption and the rehabilitation of man, and by the account of the Church's destinies; and the poem terminates in solemn tranquillity with the departure from Paradise.

The peculiar form of blank verse which Milton employed in his epics was, if not his actual invention, at least applied first

by him to the narrative or epic form of poetry. Although it consists mechanically of precisely the same elements as the dramatic metre handled by Shakespeare and his contemporaries, this kind of verse, in the hand of Milton, acquires a music of a totally different form and rhythm. Shakespearean blank verse is an irregular and flexible medium of expression ; its use in comedy, for instance, is singularly elastic, and in bright, humorous plays, like Fletcher's *Wild-Goose Chase*, it almost loses its own semblance. But the epic verse of Milton is essentially regular, solemn, and dignified, and every line bears scansion. Meanwhile, it keeps all its dramatic flexibility without breaking the limits of prosody, and with so inexhaustible a variety that it is almost impossible to find two verses of similar structure and accentuation within a near distance of each other. There is no more purely artistic poem in the world. Every modification of metre, every possible combination of emphasis, is employed to vary the harmony ; and in this respect Milton has given to his metrical structure an ever-changing cadence, as beautiful in itself, and as delicately responsive a vehicle of expression, as the multitudinous billow-like harmonies of the Homeric hexameter, whose regular and yet varied rise and fall has been constantly likened to the roll of the ocean.

Milton's blank verse.

§ 12. In the incidents and personages of the poem we find, at one and the same time, extreme simplicity and the richest complexity of invention. Where it suited his purpose, Milton closely followed the severe condensation of the Scriptural narrative and kept to its brief epitome of the history of primitive mankind ; but, where his subject required invention, he showed that no poet ever surpassed him in fertility of conception. In his description of the fallen angels, of the splendours of Heaven, of the horrors of Hell, of the idealised natural loveliness of Paradise, we recognise not only a perception of all that is awful, sublime, or attractive in nature, but, combined with it, the exceptional power of passing the boundary of human experience, and realising scenes of superhuman beauty and horror to such a degree that they are presented to the reader's eye with almost more than the vividness of memory. Again, the characters of the epic drama, the Deity and His celestial host, Satan and his infernal followers, and, perhaps above all, the ideal, heroic, yet intensely human personages of Adam and Eve in their first state of innocence, bear witness alike to the fertility of Milton's invention, the severity of his taste, and the immeasurably high standard of his artistic sense of morality. In Dante's descriptions of evil spirits, powerful and picturesque although they are—and the same may be said of an epic poet of the second class, Tasso —we have a compound of the ordinary elements of popular superstition : these devils are monsters and bugbears, with horns and tails and eyes of glowing coal ; and in their actions

The dramatis personæ *of "Paradise Lost."*

we discern nothing but a colossal exaggeration of savage malignity. Milton's Satan is no caricature of the popular demon of superstition; he is not less than archangel, although archangel ruined; and to the infernal agencies both of himself and of his attendants, the poet has given sublimity as well as variety by investing them with the most terrible and divine attributes of the classical deities. The employment of this artifice enabled him to endow this department of his subject with all the wealth of his classical learning, and to make his description suggestive as well as beautiful. Indeed, his manner of impressing the imagination is due partly to the power, grandeur, and completeness of his own conceptions, and partly to his indirect allusions. These have the faculty of awakening reminiscences in our minds—the impressions left upon us by natural beauty, by the lines of other poets, and by all that takes our fancy most in art, in history, and in legend. It follows that Milton is pre-eminently the poet of the learned; for, although the imposing effect of his pictures cannot but impress the most untrained intellect, it is only to a scholar or a reader familiar with a considerable amount of biblical and classical learning that he reveals the full opulence of his powers. Reminiscence of the kind that his work most easily stirs is the property of the student; for he does not aim at exciting those more tender and human reminiscences which are within the reach of everybody. It may be eminently and truly said of Milton's work that to him "who reads, and to his reading brings not a spirit," if not equal to his own, trained at any rate in a disposition something similar, more than half his beauty will remain imperceptible. Of course, it is easy to see where the chief peculiarity of *Paradise Lost* lies. Milton, in attempting the figures of Adam and Eve, has solved a very difficult and exceptional problem which, from the outset, affects the whole plan of the work. He has represented two human beings in a position which no other two human beings ever could or did occupy, and endowed with such feelings and sentiments as they alone could have entertained. They are beings worthy of the Paradise which they inhabit; and, in spite of their idealised intellectual proportions, we can still understand and sympathise with their moral and mental qualities. Nothing could be more admirable than the intense humanity with which Milton has clothed them; at the same time they are truly ideal impersonations of love, innocence, and worship. Like the greatest masterpieces of Greek sculpture and early Italian painting—the Demeter of Cnidus or Botticelli's Madonna of the Magnificat—they reach the full majesty of the divine without losing their mortal attributes and human joys and sorrows.

Milton's Satan.

Erudition of Milton's poetry.

Adam and Eve.

Again, the same union of the simple and the complex is to be remarked from the side of plot. While Milton still adheres,

as it suits his purpose, to the close-packed biblical narrative, he lets his invention wander where it will in the scenes of Hell, of Heaven, and particularly in his episodical account of the revolt and punishment of the fallen angels. Adam, superficially speaking, is only the nominal and conventional hero of *Paradise Lost*, and the real protagonist is Satan. It is certainly true that the necessarily inferior nature of man, compared with the tremendous agencies which rule his destiny, reduces him, at all events apparently, to a secondary part in the drama; but this difficulty is overcome by the dignity and moral elevation which Milton has given to his human personages, and by his making them the central pivot of the whole action. In this limited space it would be inappropriate to quote passages illustrative either of his poetical mechanism or of sublimity of thought; but it is remarkable that, wherever his imagination and plastic power are seen at work, he soars at once from the concrete and visible into the abstract and unseen.

Remarks on the plot of "Paradise Lost."

Macaulay's comparison between the methods of Dante and Milton points to their great difference with regard to this idealising tendency. We spoke of this a few paragraphs back as the real definition of their place with respect to each other among epic poets; here, again, it has a bearing on details of style and mechanical arrangements. Dante measures and compares, ruler and compasses in hand; Milton simply draws a vast, measureless, impressionist picture. Macaulay compares the passage in which Dante describes Geryon (*Inferno* xvi. 1) with Milton's description of Satan lying in the fiery lake (*Par. Lost*, i. 192). Dante goes on the principle of exact mensuration, and likens the monster to familiar and comprehensible objects; Milton, on the other hand, makes the giant bulk of the vanquished demon lie "floating many a rood" on the burning billows, and, for a comparison, turns to picturesque details of Leviathan and the "small night-foundered skiff moored to his scaly rind. Or again, there is the passage of unequalled grandeur (*Par. Lost*, iv. 985) in which the evil spirit defies Gabriel. The subsidiary comparison here is inseparable from the main idea:—

Pictorial effect of "Paradise Lost."

> "On the other side, Satan, alarmed,
> Collecting all his might, dilated stood,
> Like Teneriffe or Atlas, unremoved:
> His stature reached the sky, and on his crest
> Sat Horror plumed."

These are only two instances among many of a power which no poet ever possessed in an equal degree. The accompanying comparisons, full of allusions and learning of the highest order, are equally remarkable, so easily and adroitly are they introduced.

§ 13. The companion poem to the great epic is its natural

sequel, borrowed from New Testament history, *Paradise Regained*, which is very much shorter, and consists of only four books. Its subject is the temptation of our Saviour by Satan in the wilderness, and the narrative given in the fourth chapter of St. Matthew is closely followed throughout. The subject is said to have been suggested by Milton's extraordinary friend, Thomas Ellwood the Quaker. Its choice was evidently dictated by an immoderate estimate of the part played by the Tempter at the Fall, and perhaps from a certain affection for the stupendous conception of Satan. It is clear that the Temptation bears merely an external resemblance to the Fall; the event which regained a lost Paradise for man was the Redemption of man through the Saviour's death and resurrection; the Cross, the "tree of glory," is the natural counterpart to the tree of knowledge of good and evil; Calvary is the true sequel to Eden. The Temptation, however important in itself, has nothing to do with the great act of human redemption; and Milton's selection was perhaps due to his advanced age and to his consciousness that he could attempt no worthy treatment of the Passion. A similar apprehension had, years before, put an abrupt end to his ode on the same subject. Some curious spirits have detected a modification of religious belief on Milton's part which prevented him from choosing the Crucifixion as his theme; most people, however, who have come into contact with his type of religious belief know that, whatever its eccentricities may be, the fundamental dogma of the Atonement is the last it is likely to give up. In any case, the almost universal consent of readers places *Paradise Regained*, in point of interest and variety, very far beneath *Paradise Lost*. This inferiority is to be attributed, of course, to its want of action; for the whole poem is occupied with the arguments between our Lord and the Tempter, and with the description of the kingdoms of the world as contemplated from the mountain-top. Even in *Paradise Lost* the long dialogues, frequently turning upon the most arduous subtleties of theology, are now found to be tedious; although, in Milton's own day, when such topics were universally discussed, they probably enjoyed great popularity. But in that poem they are relieved by the constant interference of action. Where, as in *Paradise Regained*, there is no action whatever, they become doubly tedious. Nevertheless, in this shorter epic, the genius of Milton appears in its ripest and most complete development; the self-restraint of consummate art is everywhere apparent; and, in his descriptions of Rome, Athens, and Babylon, and of their state of society and knowledge, the great poet has reached a height of solemn grandeur which shows him to have lost nothing either of imagination or of learning. We may analyse the poem as

"Paradise Regained."

Unsatisfactory nature of its subject.

Inferiority to "Paradise Lost."

follows :—Book I. After His baptism, Jesus, meditating on His birth and His divine mission, retires into the wilderness. Satan appears under the disguise of an old peasant, and endeavours to justify himself. Book II contains a consultation of the evil spirits, after which Satan tempts our Lord with a banquet and afterwards with riches. In Book III Satan pursues his attempts, and endeavours to excite ambition in the Saviour's mind by showing Him the kingdoms of Asia. Book IV exhibits further the greatness of Rome and the intellectual glories of Athens. Our Lord, after having been conveyed back to the desert, is exposed to a pitiless storm ; Satan again appears, and, after carrying his divine Adversary to the pinnacle of the temple, is again defeated and reduced to silence. The poem ends in the triumphant hymn of the angels ministering to our Lord after His fast. In grandeur and elevation *Paradise Regained* in no sense yields to its immortal companion ; but the brilliance of its colouring and the intensity of its interest are inferior. It may be said that the beauties of *Paradise Regained* will, generally speaking, be more perceptible as the reader advances in life, and especially if his contemplative faculty be more fully developed than his imagination.

Analysis of "Paradise Regained."

§ 14. To this closing period of Milton's literary life belongs the tragedy of *Samson Agonistes*, which is constructed according to the strictest rules of Hellenic drama. The preface, a noble explanation of the scope of the work as an experiment in the highest style of tragedy, "the gravest, moralest, and most profitable of all other poems," is well worth careful reading as a type of Milton's prose style at his best. It is astonishing to find how, in adopting this intensely artificial manner, the poet overcomes all its hindrances. As in the Greek drama, the action is simple, the persons few, the statuesque severity of the iambic dialogue is relieved by the majestic lyrics given to the Chorus. Samson himself acts as spokesman, in the Greek manner, at the beginning of the poem ; similarly, the catastrophe, which cannot be worthily represented on the stage, is related by a messenger. In the character of the hero, his blindness, his sufferings, and his resignation to the will of God, Milton refers to his own afflictions. The whole piece reflects most faithfully the austere patriotism and religious feeling of the Old Testament, and the lyric choruses are perhaps the highest flight of the author's genius. He copies all the details of style and construction from the ancient dramas, and so closely that it is no exaggeration to say that, from a study of *Samson Agonistes*, a modern reader will obtain a more exact impression of the nature of Greek tragedy than from the most faithful translation of Sophocles or Euripides. Further, the stories of the Old Testament are, to our minds, precisely what the legends of heroes and demi-gods were to the Greeks ; and therefore Milton's *Samson*, con-

"Samson Agonistes."

structed on the lines of Æschylus' *Prometheus Vinctus* or Euripides' *Hercules Furens*, and dealing with the sacred life and death of a religious hero, gives us some appreciation of the hallowed meaning which those tragedies conveyed to the Athenian mind. It is hardly too much to say that the Miltonic scholar —and the word implies a scholarship reaching beyond Milton's own vast horizon, which few can compass— finds his final feast amid the treasures of the *Samson Agonistes*, and in the closely compressed beauty of its difficult, elliptic, and involved style, which to many readers proves somewhat formidable. And it is certainly true, so far as English literature goes, that the end of tragedy, its ideal representation, its unfolding of the ways of fate in human affairs, has only in two cases been approached as nearly—in *Hamlet* and *King Lear*.

Appropriateness of the treatment of "Samson" to its subject.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

CONTEMPORARIES OF MILTON.

Closely connected with Milton, principally in a political, but in some degree also in a literary relation, is the name of ANDREW MARVELL (1621–1678). He was born at Winestead, near Hull, in 1621, was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, and passed the earlier part of his life in travel. About 1650 he became tutor in the Fairfax family at Nun Appleton in Yorkshire, where he wrote lyric poetry fit to rank among the best pre-Restoration verse. In 1653 Milton recommended him to Bradshaw for the post of assistant Latin secretary. The appointment did not fall to him till 1657; but Marvell seems to have entertained all along the strongest admiration for the great poet whose colleague he thus became, and a friendship sprang up between them, founded on a common bond of tastes and agreement in religious and political questions. During the Protectorate of Richard Cromwell, Marvell was returned to Parliament as member for Hull, and, to his death he maintained an incorruptible honesty and fidelity to his rigid principles. The Restoration was a bitter thing to him, in whose display of licence and arbitrary power he could not acquiesce. Under these circumstances the poet and scholar turned satirist, belabouring the social and political vices of the time unmercifully and not without unnecessary coarseness. Many anecdotes of his constancy, his virtue, and his ready wit still exist, not always on very good authority, but all concurring in the main features of his character. He was not only eloquent, but seems to have commanded the respect of all his hearers of whatever party, which proves that, with all his Puritan stiffness, he must have been good-natured and sympathetic. His friendship with Milton is the most interesting feature of his life, but, even without that, he would claim considerable attention. His earlier lyrics, the *Lamentation of the Nymph on the Death of her Fawn*, *The Song of the Emigrants to Bermuda*, and the *Thoughts in a Garden*, are full of pleasant fancies and a singular choice of expression. On the other hand, his satire, *The Character of Holland* (1665), is a mixture of droll exaggeration and ingenious buffoonery, not at all unlike the spirit of *Hudibras*. Marvell is certainly the most lovable of the Puritan writers, and was one of the most respectable men of his age. The extent of his genius can hardly be judged appropriately, since he wrote comparatively little, but that

little has a distinction of its own which raises it far above the mediocrity of much contemporary writing—Waller, for instance, or even Cowley, wrote more and wrote worse. The first collected edition of Marvell's poems appeared in 1681, three years after his death.

Another political writer of this period is JAMES HARRINGTON (1611–1677), author of the *Oceana*, whose once famous republican theory may be regarded as the antithesis of Hobbes' monarchial scheme in the *Leviathan*. Harrington was brought up at Trinity College, Oxford, where, it is said, he was the disciple of Chillingworth, and for a long time resided abroad, attaching himself in Holland to the Court of the exiled Elector Palatine, Frederick, and visiting Rome, Copenhagen, and Venice. He was appointed, in 1647, one of Charles I's attendants during the King's imprisonment in the hands of the Parliament, and succeeded in inspiring the captive sovereign with feelings of confidence and attachment. His great work, *Oceana*, was published in 1656. It contains an elaborate project for the establishment of a pure republic upon philosophical principles, carried out to those minute details so frequent in paper constitutions, and so impossible in practical execution. Harrington's organisation is founded upon landed property, which he maintains to be the only solid foundation of power; and the distinguishing characteristic of his plan is the principle of an elective administration, whose members are to go out of office by a complicated system of rotation. His exposition is clear and logical, but the method he proposes has the never-failing defect of all these scientific systems of ideal constitution-makers; it calculates upon results as if they could be predicted with unerring certainty upon mathematical premises, and overlooks the fact that it has to do, not with ciphers or the unvarying forces of inanimate nature, but with the fickle elements of human caprice. Harrington was the founder of the celebrated Rota Club, a society composed of political enthusiasts and principally of the most philosophical republicans of the day—the Girondins of the English Revolution—who met to discuss their opinions together. He was imprisoned in the Tower in 1661, and was removed to Plymouth; but, in consideration of his growing insanity, was liberated from his confinement and restored to his friends. In spite of their care, however, he never recovered altogether from his obsession, and died of paralysis.

ALGERNON SIDNEY (1622–1682), the son of Robert, Earl of Leicester, was beheaded for high treason in the reign of Charles II, and bears in consequence the reputation of a Republican martyr. His *Discourses on Government*, not published till 1698, contain a refutation of that patriarchial theory of government which was most fully propounded in SIR ROBERT FILMER'S (d. 1653) *Patriarcha*, written in the reign of Charles I, but not published till 1680. Filmer's treatise was answered by Locke in his first *Treatise on Government* (1690).

The Civil War and Revolution, amid their exciting history, were not without many noble instances of virtue and intellect on the part of women. The most distinguished Republican ladies of the time were RACHEL, LADY RUSSELL (1636–1723), the wife of the unfortunate William, Lord Russell, and LUCY HUTCHINSON (b. 1620), wife of John Hutchinson the regicide. Both occupy an honourable place in the literature of their time: Lady Russell by the collection of letters written to her friends after her bereavement; Mrs. Hutchinson by the memoirs, which are among the most valuable and interesting, although not always the most trustworthy, documents of that agitated time. Lady Russell, whose husband was executed in 1683, survived him till 1723, but her correspondence was not collected and published till 1773.

CHAPTER XII.

BUTLER, DRYDEN, AND THE PROSE WRITERS OF THE RESTORATION.

§ 1. SAMUEL BUTLER: his life. § 2. *Hudibras.* § 3. Butler's miscellaneous writings. § 4. Life of DRYDEN. § 5. His dramas. § 6. His shorter poems. § 7. *Absalom and Achitophel; The Medal; Mac Flecknoe.* § 8. *Religio Laici* and *The Hind and the Panther.* § 9. Odes; Translations of Juvenal and Virgil. § 10. *Fables.* § 11. Dryden's prose works. § 12. BUNYAN: his life. § 13. His works: *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners.* § 14. *The Pilgrim's Progress.* § 15. *The Holy War.* § 16. CLARENDON. § 17. His *History of the Great Rebellion.* § 18. IZAAK WALTON: his *Lives* and *Complete Angler.* § 19. JOHN EVELYN. § 20. SAMUEL PEPYS. § 21. SIR ROGER L'ESTRANGE; GEORGE SAVILE, MARQUESS OF HALIFAX. § 22. The change in prose style.

§ 1. IF the greatest name in the literature of the Puritan and Republican party is that of Milton, the most illustrious literary representative of the Cavaliers is certainly SAMUEL BUTLER. Any comparison between the two is for obvious reasons impossible: the only point at which they seem to approach one another is their almost universal erudition. Butler's life was melancholy; he was incessantly persecuted by disappointment and distress; and he died, according to tradition, in such indigence that he was indebted for his grave to the pity of an admirer. His family was respectable but not wealthy: he himself was born in 1612, and was educated at Worcester free school. Great obscurity rests upon the details of his career. One account sends him to Oxford, another to Cambridge; while against these remains the doubt whether he was at either University. In all probability this last is the true conclusion, and lack of means certainly deprived him of any prolonged opportunity of acquiring in this way any portion of that immense learning which his works prove him to have possessed. As a young man, he was clerk to a country justice of the peace, one Jeffereys; and there is little doubt that in this situation he made himself acquainted with the details of English legal procedure. He was afterwards preferred to the service of the Countess of Kent. Very probably he owed this favour to Selden, who had long resided as steward in this lady's town house, and is supposed,

SAMUEL BUTLER (1612–1680). *Life.*

on the insufficient authority of Aubrey, to have been secretly married to her. We know Selden, at all events, to have admired Butler's talents and to have employed him as an amanuensis. Butler now enjoyed one of the few gleams of sunshine that cheered his unhappy lot; he possessed, in this tranquil retirement, good opportunities for study, and had the advantage of conversing with accomplished men. It is nearly certain that, as tutor or clerk, he was for some time in the service of Sir Samuel Luke, a wealthy and powerful Bedfordshire magnate, who was a violent Republican and Presbyterian, and was one of those members of Parliament excluded after Pride's Purge. In a house with such a master, Butler had the opportunity of collecting together those innumerable traits of bigotry and absurdity which he afterwards interwove into the fabric of his great satire; and there is more than a likelihood that Luke was the origin of his inimitable caricature of Hudibras, in which he embodied all the odious and ridiculous peculiarities, political and religious, of the dominant party. His great work, the burlesque satire of *Hudibras*, was published in detached portions and at irregular intervals: the first part, containing the first three cantos, in 1663, the second part in the following year, and the third not until 1678. The first instalment, composed probably long before, was obliged to await the Restoration before it made its first appearance: it goes without saying that, had it been published earlier, the author would not have been secure from serious danger. Instantly the poem became the most popular book of the age, for it gratified at once the prevailing taste for the highest wit and ingenuity, and the vindictive sentiments of the Royalists towards their enemies and tyrants. Charles II, with all his vices, could appreciate wit and learning. He carried about *Hudibras* in his pocket, praising and quoting it perpetually, until it became the fashionable rage of the Court. If analogy is any criterion, *Hudibras*, in its tone and its popularity, was the English *Pantagruel*. Charles II, however, could praise without paying, and Butler received very little solid recompense for his work. He was appointed secretary to Lord Carbury, then Lord President of Wales, and, in his fulfilment of his duties, was for some time steward of Ludlow Castle, where, as everyone will remember, Milton's *Comus* had been presented, some thirty years before, by Lord Bridgewater's children. But it was not long before Butler lost his place. It is said that the Chancellor Clarendon and the Duke of Buckingham, as well as the King, had intended to do something for the illustrious supporter of their cause; but, with the usual ingratitude and procrastination of that profligate Court, they left Butler in his former poverty; and, according to the usual account, he died wretchedly at a miserable lodging in Rose Street, Covent Garden (1680). He was buried, at the expense of his friend and admirer

Origin and publication of "Hudibras."

Death of Butler.

William Longueville, in the burial ground of the neighbouring church of St. Paul.

§ 2. *Hudibras*, Butler's title to immortality, is a satire upon the vices and absurdities of the fanatic or Republican party, and particularly of the two dominant sects, the Presbyterians and Independents. It is to the English Revolution and the Commonwealth what the *Satire Ménippée* is to the troubles and intrigues of the League. Its plan is perfectly original, although *Don Quixote* is in some measure responsible for the main idea. Butler's object was, however, entirely different from Cervantes', and his execution is so modified as to leave his work covered with a peculiar and novel glory of its own. We realise Cervantes' aim in that we laugh at his hero's extravagances without injuring our love and respect for his fundamental nobility and heroism. Butler, on the other hand, strove to render his personages as hateful and contemptible as his sense of humour allowed. Don Quixote is ludicrous simply on account of the discrepancy between his ideals and his actual circumstances : the paradox appeals to our humour and becomes laughable. Lancelot or Galahad would be ridiculous in his position. With Hudibras everything is changed. He is a monumental combination of ugliness, cowardice, pedantry, selfishness, and hypocrisy, and is on the verge of being an object, not of ridicule, but of hatred and detestation. These are not the passions of comedy. But his creator has shown consummate skill in stopping short just where his aim required it. Our sense of humour springs from contrast ; it is, at the outset, a sense of discord. Just as our sense of beauty depends on our appreciation of harmony, so, the more discord we see in our surroundings, the greater will be our sense of the ludicrous. From this fundamental principle all comic writing springs, and to this aim it is again directed—to excite in the reader the feelings of the writer. Consequently, all comic representation of whatever kind naturally divides itself into two categories, both attaining their end by this use of one principle, which they exhibit in two different ways. In one, a lofty subject is intentionally treated in a low and prosaic manner and with a keen attention to detail. This is the method of burlesque and parody. In the other, the low and prosaic subject is treated with a detailed pomposity which we call the mock-heroic manner. In either case the contrast or discord between the subject and its treatment, suddenly presented to the imagination, produces the same emotion and rouses the same sense.

"Hudibras" (1663).

The poem of *Hudibras* describes the adventures of a fanatic justice of the peace and his clerk, who go out on an expedition against the amusements of the common people. Popular enjoyment had been one of the chief bugbears of the Rump Parliament, and had been the hostile object of several violent and oppressive acts. Not

Historical circumstances of "Hudibras."

only were the theatres suppressed and all cheerful amusements prohibited during that gloomy time, but the rougher pastimes of the lower classes were suppressed by authority—and not without justice, if we take into account the popularity of bear-baiting. The celebrated story of Colonel Pride, who caused the unfortunate bears to be shot by a file of soldiers, furnished the enemies of the Puritan government with inexhaustible materials for epigram and caricature. These severe measures were, so far as we can judge, the result, not so much of aversion to the brutal cruelty of the sport, as of a systematic hostility to everything that bore a semblance of gaiety and amusement. Sir Hudibras, for whom, as we have seen, Butler found a probable model in Sir Samuel Luke, is, in his person and equipment, his moral and intellectual features, an unique figure, comparable for completeness, oddity of imagery, and richness of grotesque allusion, to almost any character drawn by Lucian, Rabelais, Voltaire, or Swift. The personality of Hudibras had, to some extent, been foreshadowed by the great hand of Ben Jonson in his kindly but ludicrous picture of Justice Overdo, who goes out to observe for himself the "enormities" of Bartholomew Fair, and meets with sad misfortunes in his expedition. This was, however, in 1614: the Royalists of 1663 would look for a more scathing satire. Hudibras is the type of the Presbyterian party. His clerk, Ralpho, the Sancho Panza of this new Quixote, is the representative of the sour, wrong-headed, but more enthusiastic Independents. Their adventures are told in a versification adopted from the old Anglo-Norman Trouvères and the legends of the Round Table. Hudibras' name is borrowed from the same early source. Thus, comparing the baseness of the incidents, the minuteness of detail, and the long dialogues between the magistrate and his servant, with the stately actions which originally adorned this fluent metre, our impression of the parody is immediately raised to an infinitely greater delight. Sir Hudibras and Ralpho, in the prosecution of their crusade, fall in with a procession of ragamuffins conducting a bear to the baiting-ground. They refuse to disperse at the knight's summons, and a furious mock-heroic battle ensues. Hudibras, after various fortunes, comes off best, and succeeds in imprisoning the principal culprits in the parish stocks. Their comrades return to the charge, free them, and, in their stead, place the knight and squire in durance. They, in their turn, are liberated by a rich widow to whom Hudibras is paying his court, purely from interested motives. The hero afterwards visits the lady, and receives a sound beating from her servants disguised as devils, after which he consults a lawyer and an astrologer as to his means of obtaining revenge and satisfaction. However, the merit and interest of this extraordinary poem by no means consist in its plot. Its incidents are, indeed, described with extraordinary animation and a grotesque richness of in-

Its mock-heroic character

Its plot.

vention, but there is a complete want of unity and connection of interest, nor can we trace any general combination of events to an intrigue or a final catastrophe. Indeed, we could hardly expect to do so in a work whose scope is so different from that of mere fiction or even of comedy.

Sequel to the original story.

There was a long interval between the publication of the first and of the last canto; and, during that time, the politics of the day had undergone a great change. Butler, whose main object was to satirise the follies and wickedness of the reigning party, was obliged to direct his shafts against totally different vices and persons: thus, in the last canto, he describes the general breaking-up of the Rump Parliament and the events immediately preceding the Restoration. His poem, like the adventure of the bear and the fiddle which it contains, "begins, and breaks off in the middle." But no reader ever regretted the irregular and undecided march of the story. We do not look at *Hudibras* with that curiosity which finds its delight in a well-developed intrigue. An astonishing fertility of invention displayed in the description both of things and persons, an analysis of character which is obvious in the long and frequent dialogues (principally between Hudibras and Ralpho), a vivid and animated use of colour in every incident, and, above all, an immeasurable flood of witty and unexpected illustration, pursuing its unhindered course through the whole poem—these are the qualities which have made Butler one of the great classics of the English language. The characteristic of his wit is its power of tracing unexpected analogies, whether of difference or resemblance, its faculty of bringing together ideas apparently incongruous, which, once connected, convey the secret of their new relation to the pleased and surprised reader, and give him, for the moment, an exhilarating sense of personal discovery. Perhaps no writer possessed this power in an equal degree: his learning was portentous in its extent and variety, and he appears to have accumulated his vast stores, not only in the beaten tracks, but in the most obscure corners and out-of-the-way regions of books and sciences. His extent of thought, as well as of reading, is astonishing: if his unexpected images are due to his knowledge of books, they are due also to his fertile and ever active imagination. The effect of the whole is increased by the easy, conversational, almost vulgar tone of his language, in which colloquial and familiar slang is mixed up with the pedantic terms of art and learning. In his metre, too, he is singularly happy. The short octosyllabic verse carries us on with unabated rapidity, and the constant recurrence of odd and fantastic rhymes, whose artful ingenuity is concealed beneath a cloak of the most unstudied ease, produces a series of pleasant surprises that awaken and satisfy the attention.

Butler's wit and humour.

His style and metre.

Butler is at once intensely concise and abundantly fertile. His expressions, taken singly, have the pregnant brevity of proverbs; the richness of his illustrations perpetually opens new vistas of comic and witty association. He is as suggestive, in his manner of writing, as Milton himself. But Milton's method is to convey his imagery by indirect allusion and to leave much to inference: Butler brings to bear upon his satiric pictures an unbounded store of ideas drawn from the most recondite sources. Milton leads the reader's mind to wander through all the realms of nature, philosophy, and art; Butler brings his stores of knowledge and reading to our very door. It is this marvellous condensation of style, combined with the quaintness of his rhymes, that has made so many of Butler's couplets proverbial in ordinary conversation, so that they are frequently employed by people who perhaps do not know the real origin of these terse witticisms. The contrast of character in Hudibras and Ralpho is, of course, far less dramatic than the contrast between Don Quixote and Sancho Panza; but there can be nothing more admirable than Butler's distinction between two cognate varieties of pedantry and fanaticism, and the delicately opposed sophistries and equivocations which abound in the arguments between these two representative types. One can hardly expect that Butler, with an object exclusively satirical, should have given the fanatics whom he attacked credit for their nobler qualities; and so we must not be surprised or misled by finding their intense religious zeal transformed into hypocritical greed, and their boundless courage blamed as cowardice. The poem is crowded with allusions to particular persons and events of the Civil War and Commonwealth. Its merits can be fully appreciated only by those who are minutely acquainted with the history of the epoch; for Butler, like Rabelais, is eminently one of those authors who require to be studied with the help of a commentary. Nevertheless, the mere ordinary reader, although many delicate strokes will escape him, may read *Hudibras* with considerable delight and profit. Much of the satire may have its specific direction, but a very large proportion will always be applicable as long as there exist in the world hypocritical pretenders to sanctity and quacks in politics and learning. Many of the scenes and conversations will never be out of date—the consultation with the lawyer, the dialogues on love and marriage with the lady, the scenes with Sidrophel, and a multitude of others. There is much in common between Butler and Hogarth: the dresses and manners of *Hudibras* and the Rake's Progress may be obsolete, and their topical detail superfluous, but the main facts are the same in all ages. And finally, Butler's writings alone will furnish abundant illustrations of all those varieties of wit which Barrow enumerated—the "pat allusion to a known story, the seasonable application of a trivial saying,

Butler's individuality as a satirist.

the playing in words and phrases, taking advantage from the ambiguity of their sense or the affinity of their sound. Sometimes," Barrow goes on to say, "it is wrapped in a dress of humorous expression; sometimes it lurks under an odd similitude; sometimes it is lodged in a sly question, in a smart answer, in a quirkish reason, in a shrewd intimation, in cunningly diverting or cleverly retorting an objection; sometimes it is couched in a bold scheme of speech, in a tart irony, in a lusty hyperbole, in a startling metaphor, in a plausible reconciling of contradictions, or in acute nonsense; sometimes an affected simplicity; sometimes a presumptuous bluntness giveth it being; sometimes it riseth only from a lucky hitting upon what is strange; sometimes from a crafty wresting obvious matter to the purpose."

§ 3. A large mass of Butler's miscellaneous writings has been published; and a curious discovery was made, long after his death, of the commonplace book in which he entered the results of his reading, and such thoughts or expressions as he intended to work up in his writings. The posthumous miscellanies, published in 1759, consist of prose and verse. In prose there are sketches of a series of characters somewhat in the Theophrastian manner of Earle and Overbury. They are marked by his chief characteristic—his extreme pregnancy of wit and allusion. The poems are in many instances bitter ridicule of the puerile pursuits with which he charges the philosophical investigations of that day, and he is especially severe upon the then recently-founded Royal Society; but he was certainly unjust to the ardour and success of contemporary research, and confounded with the sublime outburst of experimental philosophy the quackery and pedantry which necessarily accompany all such movements.

Butler's minor writings.

§ 4. The great name of JOHN DRYDEN forms the connecting link between the English literature of the seventeenth century and that completely different condition of thought and style which was the most immediate result of the Restoration. Speaking generally, his literary life belongs to the quarter of the century subsequent to the publication of *Hudibras*. He was born on the 9th of August, 1631, at Aldwinkle All Saints, a village between Oundle and Thrapston in Northamptonshire. Erasmus Dryden, his father, was the younger son of a local baronet, and had himself an estate in the adjoining parish of Tichmarsh. It is supposed that this gentleman was an ardent Puritan and even an Anabaptist; the tradition, however, appears to rest upon the evidence of Dryden's earliest academic pieces. At all events, he sent his son to Westminster, where Busby was then master, and afterwards to Cambridge. In 1650 young Dryden entered at Trinity College with a Westminster scholarship, and proceeded Bachelor of Arts in 1653. At the death of the Lord Protector in 1658 his *Heroic Stanzas*

JOHN DRYDEN (1631–1700). *Life.*

appeared, full of warm eulogy of the dead ruler and of promise for his own future. Whether his profession was sincere or otherwise, he abandoned his Puritan sympathies at the Restoration and attached himself firmly to the Royalist party. The Royalist spirit must, in any case, have been more congenial to him; and it was from that side only that he could expect any substantial reward. His first effort in this direction was the *Astræa Redux*, a somewhat fulsome panegyric of the restored prince, written in the half-pagan, half-Christian spirit of the classical student, and grotesquely bringing together the sea-gods and the Prince of Peace. One scarcely wonders that the Royalist wits, who had noticed his praise of Cromwell, lampooned his inconsistency, and that he met with more than his fair share of ridicule. But this was the beginning of a life filled with vigorous and unremitting literary labour and devoted to the work of composition. The drama had returned with the Restoration, and plays became, more than ever before, the most productive form of literature. Dryden, with the full consciousness of his own defects in dramatic equipment, gave himself up to play-writing, and signed a contract with the king's players, obliging himself to supply them with three dramas every year. If he lacked pathos and was incapable of delicate analysis of character, he possessed wonderful industry and fertility of invention. His twenty-seven dramas, which appeared in rapid succession from *The Wild Gallant* (1663) to *Love Triumphant* (1694), are full of brilliant dialogue, striking situations, and romantic and picturesque incidents, and are, above all, distinguished by that power of majestic versification which was his in an unique and consummate degree. In their merits and their faults they are characteristic of the author's peculiar genius and of the taste of his period.

Beginnings as a dramatist.

In 1663 Dryden married Lady Elizabeth Howard, a daughter of the Earl of Berkshire. Poets' marriages are not always happy, and Dryden's wife is said to have been a sour and querulous lady. In his poems he displayed himself, if not as a professed misogynist, at any rate as a foe to marriage; but this may have been simply in accordance with the usual literary pose of the day, and probably had little to do with his family troubles. Four years later, in 1667, he produced his first great poem, the *Annus Mirabilis*, in which he commemorated the great calamities of the preceding year, the fire of London and the war with the Dutch. That humiliating war was, it is well known, a temporary check upon that maritime supremacy which had been confirmed by the Protectorate. Dryden, however, chose to consider it as the apotheosis of English naval prowess, interlarded his verse with Scriptural and mythological illustrations, pictured the "mighty ghosts" of the Henrys and Edwards looking on at the battle, and showered a whole vocabulary of praise upon the undeserving king and that worst

His marriage.

Publication of "Annus Mirabilis" (1667).

of admirals, the Duke of York. On the other hand, this amazing flattery was conveyed in a style whose vigour, majesty and force proved this poet the rightful heir to the throne of English poetry. His *Essay on Dramatic Poesy* (1668) formally maintained the superiority of rhyme in theatrical dialogue, and proclaimed him the champion of the dominant literary party, who were endeavouring to subject the English stage to the rules and principles of French tragedy. He had previously defended the practice in his preface to *The Rival Ladies* (1664), and afterwards continued to justify his theory in several pieces—for example, in *Tyrannic Love* (1670), and in *Aureng-Zebe* (1676). But his good taste eventually relieved him of his self-imposed burden, and he returned to the far finer and more national system of blank verse which was the metrical heritage of the Elizabethan era.

Defence of rhyme in drama.

The *Annus Mirabilis* had been distinctly a stroke of policy. Sir William D'Avenant, the Poet Laureate, died in 1668; and Dryden, who had borrowed for his poem the metre of D'Avenant's *Gondibert*, was his obvious successor. He was quickly appointed (1670) Poet Laureate and Historiographer to the king, with a salary of £200 a year. The *Essay on Dramatic Poesy*, which immediately followed this promotion, has thus the importance of a pronouncement *ex cathedra*. But the honour brought with it an endless series of literary and political troubles. The great contest of his life was a most unworthy squabble with Elkanah Settle, whose *Empress of Morocco* (acted 1671 ?), a tragedy written in his own favourite medium of rhyme, vexed him terribly, probably because it obtained a great success on his own field. His attack upon the unfortunate dramatist was savage and personal; and, like most attacks of the kind, did its author very little good. Settle made an undeserved fame by the whole proceeding. He answered Dryden in a similar vein of scurrility after the publication of that brilliant tragedy, *The Conquest of Granada* (1672). Rochester, a most erratic patron of letters, introduced him to the Court, where the ladies acted *The Empress of Morocco*, and, having done so much for him, dropped him as easily as he had taken him up. Settle was quite the worst poet who has ever gained a fictitious eminence. From the favour of the Court he dropped to the position of civic poet; he finally became a contriver of puppet-plays for vagrant mountebanks, and died in the Charterhouse. Yet Dryden thought fit to cover him with immortal abuse, and stigmatise so wretched a nonentity in a work so great as *Absalom and Achitophel*! Dryden's quarrels with Buckingham and Rochester, if not so notorious, were more serious. In 1671 Buckingham and some others, one of whom, it is said, was Samuel Butler, produced a burlesque called *The Rehearsal*, which,

Appointment to the Laureateship.

Quarrel with Elkanah Settle,

and with Buckingham and Rochester.

originally intended to satirise D'Avenant, was now directed against Dryden. This marked a serious rupture between the Poet Laureate and the party of Court wits. The exact authorship of the *Essay upon Satire*, circulated in manuscript in 1679, is disputed, and has generally been assigned to Dryden in collaboration with John Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave, and afterwards Duke of Buckinghamshire. The poet had dedicated *Aureng-Zebe* to him, three years before, and, two years later, sang his praises as the Adriel of *Absalom and Achitophel*. Whichever of the two was responsible, the *Essay upon Satire* contained a contemptuous set of lines on Rochester and made insulting references to the Duchess of Portsmouth. The injured parties put their heads together, and, in accordance with the fashionable resentments of the day, hired a number of bravoes, who waylaid the poet and gave him a severe beating. Mulgrave, in his *Essay upon Poetry* (1682), put the blame on his own shoulders, and spoke of Dryden as "praised and beaten for another's rhymes"; but probability is just as much against as for the truth of this statement. The whole story is characteristic of the social amenities of the time.

Publication of "Absalom and Achitophel" (1681).

The first part of Dryden's noblest and most original poem, *Absalom and Achitophel*, appeared in 1681. Underneath the transparent disguise of a narrative of Absalom's rebellion against David, he attacked the factious policy of the Chancellor Shaftesbury (Achitophel), and his intrigues with the Duke of Monmouth to preclude the Duke of York from the throne. The second part of the poem appeared the year after, but was principally written by Nahum Tate. Dryden contributed two hundred lines, but probably revised the whole into harmony with his own style. Tate introduced his illustrious partner into the poem under the appropriate name of Asaph (part ii. ll. 1037–1048). *Absalom and Achitophel* was inscribed to the general reader in one of those classic prefaces which are not the least among Dryden's claims to honour. At the very same time he pointed the application of his satire even more acutely by his *Medal, a Satire against Sedition*, headed with an apt quotation from Virgil and preceded by an Epistle to the Whigs. "To whom," he asked, "can I dedicate this poem with more justice than to you? It is the representation of your own hero; it is the picture drawn at length, which you admire and prize so much in little." But he was not altogether engrossed by his rancour against Shaftesbury. In *Mac Flecknoe* (1682) he made a furious onslaught on a new literary rival, Thomas Shadwell, scattering abuse literally on all hands, and casting obloquy on the memories of those great dramatists, Heywood and Shirley. The poem, in its reckless eloquence and malice, is, as it were, a forecast of *The Dunciad*. His *Religio Laici, or a Layman's Faith*, belongs also to 1682. Here he speaks as a devout controversialist, defending the

Poems of 1682.

Church of England against the dissenting sects. It is one of the noblest poems of the kind in any language. However, he must have regretted his outspoken partisanship before very long; for, in 1686, he joined the Church of Rome. It is impossible to believe that this was the mere tergiversation of a courtier, consequent upon the king's change of faith; although there is an unfortunate and suspicious coincidence between the two events, which goes far to make out a case against Dryden's sincerity. It is not improbable that James II did all that lay in his power to convert his Poet Laureate: it is equally probable that the Poet Laureate, not blessed with political prudence, lent a ready ear to his solicitations from motives of policy, and was finally convinced by the doctrines which he had at first heedlessly embraced. At any rate, *The Hind and the Panther* (1687) was a sincere and logical defence of the side which he had adopted; and, as a satire, is second only to *Absalom and Achitophel*, although its ingenuity is almost unpleasantly far-fetched. In the following year came the catastrophe of the Revolution. Under William and Mary no Romanist or partisan of absolute monarchy could hope for the royal favour. Dryden was guilty on both counts, and his position was irretrievable. He had the mortification of seeing Shadwell take his place as Laureate; but even this fall could not arrest his activity or damp his fire. Between 1690 and 1694 he produced five new dramas of various merit. In 1693 appeared his version of Juvenal and Persius, whom he was admirably calculated to translate. It contained the whole of Persius and five select Satires of Juvenal. In addition to these, the seventh Satire and the fourteenth Satire were translated by his two sons, and inserted in the work. Charles, his eldest son, who was responsible for the first of these, became chamberlain to Pope Innocent XII, and, in 1704, while on a visit to England, was drowned in the Thames near Windsor. John, the second, beside his share in this work, was the independent author of a comedy; and a third son, Erasmus Henry, became a Dominican.

"The Hind and the Panther" (1687).

Dryden's fall after the Revolution.

From 1694 to 1697 Dryden was employed upon his famous translation of Virgil, the poet to whom, in style and by predilection, he was most nearly akin. This seems to have been one of his most profitable literary ventures, for he is reported to have made £1200 by it. Although he was at this time in his sixty-seventh year, his *Virgil* was not his last work. In the very year of his death he produced his *Tales and Fables*, a collection of stories, partly borrowed and modernised from Chaucer, partly versified from Boccaccio. These, strange to relate, exhibit his invention, fire, and power of harmony at their very best; and in this volume appeared not only a specimen translation of the first book of the *Iliad*, interesting to students of Pope, but that noble and

The "Virgil" (1697) *and later poems.*

immortal *Ode in Honour of St. Cecilia's Day*, which, under its first title of *Alexander's Feast*, is probably, to most readers, the poem most representative of its author's genius. But on May 1, 1700, the great poet died at his house in Gerrard Street, Soho, the cause of death being a mortification of the leg, combined with dropsy. He was buried in the south transept of Westminster Abbey, sacred to poets, and Dr. Samuel Garth, the physician and poet, made an oration over his grave. He was followed by the universal admiration of his countrymen, who saw that in him they had lost incomparably their greatest poet. His old friend, John Sheffield, then Duke of Buckinghamshire, had the word "Dryden" inscribed above his place of burial.

Death of Dryden.

§ 5. Dryden's voluminous work divides itself into three categories—the drama of his early days, the poetry of his maturity, and that flexible prose, whose equable current runs the same from first to last.

Classification of Dryden's work.

In the drama, Dryden is the chief representative of that great revolution in taste which followed the Restoration, supplanting the free and powerful style of the Elizabethan drama by an imitation of French models. Dryden, however, is on the boundary line, and combines much of the romantic spirit of the earlier age with the formal affectations of the later type. We shall speak in another chapter of the character of the Restoration drama. Here it is enough to say that it reflected only too faithfully the profligacy of the Court. The stage is, unfortunately, too obvious to the invasion of immorality, and, with the departure of Puritan severity, the theatre renewed its existence with the aid of shameless licence. Dryden's plays are especially open to this prevailing charge of lewdness. It is only fair to remark that, while Wycherley and Congreve painted vice as virtue, Dryden now and then attempted to satirise it; but he had not the peculiar humour which is necessary for that task. His comic scenes were dull and obscure; their point was lost in their grossness, and they gave no compensation for their stupidity. His comedy of *Limberham* (1678), which he appears to have written with excellent intentions, was a flagrant instance of failure. It was prohibited as too indecent for the stage; but, by general consent, it is too hopelessly dull for anything. Previously, his *Marriage à la Mode* had been damned with faint praise: his *Assignation*—both pieces were acted in 1672—had been hissed off the boards. *The Spanish Friar, or the Double Discovery* (1681) was more successful, and contains scenes and characters of great merit. Unfortunately, Dryden was a time-server, and was only too ready to prostitute his pure and classic genius to the debauched fashions of his day. He was, at any rate, justly ashamed of himself; for, when Collier made his famous attack on the stage, and rebuked him for the indecency and irreligion of his plays, he submitted silently to the reproach.

1. *His dramas.*

His place among post-Restoration dramatists.

If he was not personally a man of high spirit, he at least showed by this that he had the grace to be ashamed of faults which he had not the virtue to avoid.

The tragedy of the day showed as much of purity and elevation as the comedy showed of profligacy. And nowhere is the strength and weakness of the age shown more clearly than in Dryden's tragedies, with their noble rhetoric, and with their sentimental exaggeration of the virtue of self-sacrifice. He knew very little about the tender emotions, and could not delineate character in the least; and of all this he was thoroughly conscious. But he did his best to compensate for these deficiencies. If striking, unexpected, and picturesque incidents, powerful declamatory dialogue, and a majesty, ease and splendour of versification can make up for the absence of deeper and more essential qualities, then Dryden achieved a great success. He is at his best in scenes which embody quarrels and violent recriminations, and end with reconciliation—scenes like the quarrel between Brutus and Cassius in Shakespeare, and like many others in Corneille and Racine. Conscious of his power, he repeated such situations over and over again. There is, for instance, the dispute between Antony and Ventidius in *All for Love* (1678), the play which he founded upon *Antony and Cleopatra*. Of another similar scene in *Don Sebastian* (1690), the quarrel of Dorax and the King, the late Mr. Roden Noel said, with some exaggeration, that it "is unsurpassed in Shakespeare. It presents a credible, though marvellous translation of a proud, injured, embittered man to love and loyalty." These are the words of a professed devotee of Restoration tragedy. If we cannot assent to them, we must at all events confess that the scene is as fine as anything in Fletcher, far finer than Massinger's most elaborate anatomy of theatrical passion. Dryden himself, with his constant craving for novelty, was tempted to underrate his Jacobean predecessors, although, at times, he expressed a vehement admiration for their work. While he praised Jonson and Fletcher, he spoke of Heywood and Shirley with boundless contempt. If he could admire, he had, on the other hand, little veneration. In conjunction with D'Avenant, he condescended, in 1667, to alter and make additions to Shakespeare's *Tempest*, transforming that pure and ideal creation into a brilliant and meretricious opera, full of scenic effects. To Caliban he added Sycorax, and beside Miranda he placed a young man who had never seen a woman, thus corrupting the play with prurient allusions, and seeking applause by a contrivance which is little less than shameful. The play was published in 1670, after D'Avenant's death. In exactly the same way he transformed Milton's *Paradise Lost* into an operatic entertainment called *The State of Innocence* (1674), which he addressed to Mary of Modena, then Duchess of York, in more

His tragedies.

Dramatic effect of individual scenes.

Dryden's opinion and treatment of earlier dramatists.

than his ordinary tones of flattery. *The State of Innocence* was, however, far too innocent for decent exhibition, and the play was merely published, but not acted. In those days prologues and epilogues accompanied every play as a matter of course, and were written with great skill, containing either allusions to the topics of the moment or judgments on the great authors of the earlier stage. When delivered by a fascinating actress or great tragedian they were received with enthusiastic applause. Dryden was equally adroit and fertile in this class of composition, and many of his prologues and epilogues are masterpieces in the comic and elevated styles. He wrote not only for his own plays, but for those of his friends, and for revivals of Elizabethan pieces. Thus he wrote the epilogue for his son's comedy; and Lee, Southerne, Mrs. Behn, and Sir George Etherege availed themselves of his services. Among his lines for revived plays are the prologue and epilogue to Jonson's *Silent Woman*, spoken by the actor, Hart, before the University of Oxford. These verses were recited by the finest actors and actresses of the day. Betterton introduced and dismissed Beaumont and Fletcher's *Prophetess*: Mrs. Bracegirdle and Nell Gwyn were among the actresses who spoke to the public in Dryden's name. And we must not forget that some of Dryden's plays owed an additional attraction to the incidental music of the great Henry Purcell.

His prologues and epilogues.

§ 6. Even in Dryden's earliest productions—in his *Heroic Stanzas* in praise of Cromwell—it is easy to recognise that force, vigour, and tuneful majesty of style which distinguish him from all the other writers of his own age, and, in a certain sense, place him above the writers of any age in English literature. The poet who inspired him and attracted his genius was pre-eminently Virgil: to mention his style is to recall inevitably its Virgilian character, the quality which made him the obvious translator of the Latin poet. The classical movement which Waller and Cowley had inaugurated in English poetry reached its highest point in the spontaneous verse of Dryden. His poetry, with all its classical formalism, hits the happy mean between superfluous symmetry and deliberate romanticism of style; it avoids on the one hand the studied neatness of the Dutch garden, and, on the other, the unkempt disorder of the wilderness; it is formal, but natural; vigorous and impetuous, but symmetrical. It is in some ways widely different from his dramatic style, which, although fettered by the form of rhyme, is closely allied, in its unrestrained expression, to the romantic conventionalities of the Elizabethan era. This tendency to rant and bombast is never to be noticed in Dryden's poetry; his worst faults, his hyperbolical flattery and the consequent exaggeration of phrase, are intellectual, not mechanical errors. In all his best poems his style is invariably easy and, at the same time, commanding: his turbulent lines sweep along imperiously in a full flood of splendid phrase and

2. His poems.

glittering eloquence. In some of his first attempts he adopted the form of the stanza. D'Avenant's *Gondibert* had a remarkable influence upon him, and the four-lined stanza with alternate rhymes of which it was composed suggested the metre of his *Annus Mirabilis*. In his preface, inscribed to Sir Robert Howard (who had been his collaborator in *The Indian Queen*), he praises the quatrain as "more noble, and of greater dignity, both for sound and number, than any other verse in use amongst us." But he ultimately preferred the rhymed heroic couplet of ten-syllable lines, and carried it to the highest perfection of which it is capable. Even in his four-lined stanzas we may see the essential elements of this last form of versification, for each may be resolved into two sonorous couplets. This metre, wielded with singular force and mastery, is the ultimate criterion of his style; whether he reasons, or describes, or declaims, or narrates, he moves with perfect freedom; and the regularity of the structure of his verse, and the recurrence of the rhyme, so far from appearing to shackle his movements, seem only to give majesty and impetus to his march. Frequently he adopts the expedient of adding another line to rhyme with his couplet, thus transforming it into a triplet; and this third line, which is often an alexandrine of twelve instead of ten syllables, winds up the period with a roll of noble harmony.

Early adoption of the quatrain.

Ultimate adoption of the heroic couplet.

§ 7. Among his longer poems, the greatest is *Absalom and Achitophel*. From the historical side this satire is a portrait-gallery of Dryden's contemporaries, in which the pictures are arranged with a wonderful continuity and with strict regard to the main lines of the structure. Every reader will remember the portraits of Shaftesbury, the dissembling Achitophel himself; of Buckingham, the versatile and mutable Zimri; of Settle, Doeg, "whom God for mankind's mirth has made"; of Shadwell, the drunken Og, "round as a globe, and liquor'd every chink"; and of Oates, who figures as Corah, a "monumental brass." The description of Zimri received fresh immortality in the thirty-eighth chapter of Scott's *Peveril of the Peak*; while the characters of Og and Doeg, which form the greater part of Dryden's share in the second book, were not improved upon in any single passage of *The Dunciad*. The vast difference between Dryden's poetic and dramatic style is obvious when we compare these brilliant and vivacious paintings with the lay figures whose woodenness does duty for human nature in too many of his plays. Of course, the poem can be fully appreciated only when it is read side by side with contemporary history, and the innumerable allusions to the questions and persons of the day are carefully followed out; but even the general student, who will examine it simply as a piece of literature, will find in it all the highest qualities of English poetry in its capacity for argument and description. *The*

"Absalom and Achitophel" (1681).

Medal, the second anti-Shaftesbury satire, contains passages which are scarcely inferior. Dryden's satire is not merely a piece of special pleading for a cause to which he had attached himself for politic reasons; he convinces himself by his own rhetoric and is carried away by its tide; and thus all his work, however contradictory its spirit may be as a whole, has a very remarkable individual sincerity.

"The Medal" (1681).

We have already mentioned *Mac Flecknoe*, which forms, as it were, a premature appendix to the sufficiently malevolent picture of Og. This somewhat scurrilous poem inaugurated a form of satire — the personal recriminations of literary men. An Irish priest called Flecknoe, whose scribblings are of no more importance than the "creaking couplets" of Byron's "hoarse Fitzgerald," had recently died; and Dryden describes his official abdication of the throne of dulness in favour of Shadwell, who succeeds under the obvious title of Mac Flecknoe. The poem is extremely coarse and violent, but it contains some genuine humour which seems to detach itself from the bitterness of the rest, and to appeal to us on its own merits. Beyond this it supplies a valuable commentary upon the dramatic literature of the day. It is their topical character, as we say, that renders Dryden's poems so completely interesting from every point of view.

"Mac Flecknoe" (1682).

§ 8. We now pass to the controversial poems. The *Religio Laici* and *The Hind and the Panther* are written from diametrically opposite sides of the question; between them lies a great change of religious opinion with all the struggle for conviction which of necessity must accompany it. But both poems exhibit in its highest perfection Dryden's consummate mastery of the most difficult species of writing. It is not easy for a poet to combine in his verse close theological reasoning with rich illustration and picturesque imagery. We need not concern ourselves with his arguments; on either side they are the arguments which would naturally present themselves to the disputant, and are founded upon Scripture or tradition, upon induction or experience, as may best serve the writer's purpose. But the reader, following the powerful and unfettered march of the reasoning, recognising the abundance of picturesque illustration, and convinced by the noble outbursts of enthusiasm, is converted by either poem, so long as he has it in his hand, to the particular form of faith which it advocates, and acknowledges thereby that Dryden is one of the greatest of ratiocinative poets.

Controversial poetry: "Religio Laici" (1682) *and "The Hind and the Panther"* (1687).

The fable of *The Hind and the Panther* is, nevertheless, far-fetched and grotesque. The "milk-white hind," representing the Church of Rome, is involved, at the beginning, in an elaborate argument with the panther, who is the savage symbol of the Anglican Church; while the English sects are politely designated under a series of unflattering zoological epithets. We enjoy the company of

Allegory of "The Hind and the Panther."

"the bloody bear, an Independent beast," the Baptist boar, the atheist ape, and the Socinian fox—a menagerie which is not well disposed to the innocent hind. The preliminary absurdity of this fable is calculated to wreck the modern reader's interest. Dryden could hardly have made a less happy choice. The *Religio Laici*, which steers clear of allegory, is, as a whole, the better of the two, and its opening is incomparably fine; but in both poems the allusions which the writer makes to his own religious convictions are equally striking and worthy of note. It is very curious that Dryden, although the fundamental principle of his devout aspirations was a pious reverence for the Church to which he belonged, seldom gives a very favourable character to the clergy. Nor does he confine his irony to the priests of one religion, but impartially inveighs against pagan augurs, Turkish imaums and Egyptian hierophants, classing them in one reprobation with Christian ministers of every church and sect. On the other hand, he gives high praise to individuals; and Archbishop Sancroft, and Compton, Bishop of London, find honourable places in his satiric masterpiece as Zadok and the Sagan of Jerusalem.

Dryden's religion.

§ 9. His lyric poetry is less in quantity than in quality. He had that talent for song-writing which was the common property of his age, and in his romantic dramas we find many beautiful and harmonious songs. But his more serious lyric efforts are of a different order, and follow the so-called Pindaric form of ode, stringing lines of irregular length together by a loose bond of rhyme. This, for example, is the form of his elegy on Charles II, the *Threnodia Augustalis*, which, apart from its monstrous tone of adulation and the attendant Nemesis of bathos, is a very admirably sustained work considering its length; but a better example of the same kind of lyric is his beautiful elegy on Purcell, which was set to music by Purcell's pupil, Dr. Blow. His masterpiece, however, in this kind of verse, is his *Ode in Honour of St. Cecilia's Day*, written for music, and celebrating the power and triumphs of the art. This noble lyric consists of a narrative or parable describing Alexander the Great's feast in the royal halls of Persepolis, and the effect of Timotheus' harping upon the conqueror's passions. Each strophe is, as it were, the lyric copy of the passion which it describes; there is no other poem in English which conveys its impressions with so perfect and so indispensable a command of form. The poem, after leading up to the highest pitch of passionate fury, passes, without an interval, into its calm final strain, the praise of St. Cecilia, "inventress of the vocal frame," and ends with the exquisite quatrain :—

Dryden's lyrics.

"Alexander's Feast."

> "Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
> Or both divide the crown;
> He rais'd a mortal to the skies,
> She drew an angel down."

Dryden is said to have written this wonderful ode in the space of a few hours. At any rate, its leading characteristic, beyond its extraordinary harmony of sound and sense, is its energy. Its expression may now and then be unequal, but, for the most part, it rushes on with Pindar's own flow and swing of rhythm.

Verse translations.

In his verse translations of Juvenal and Persius, Dryden showed that he could transfer to his own language, if not perhaps the exact sense, at any rate the general spirit of those difficult authors. There was a considerable similarity between the tone of mind of Dryden and of Juvenal; there was the same force, the same tendency to declamation, the same unscrupulous boldness in painting the odious and detestable; but Juvenal's outspoken frankness in delineating the incredible corruption of his age degenerates, in Dryden, into mere licentiousness. The Restoration satirist seems to gloat over details which Juvenal introduced purely with the intention of condemning vice by exhibiting all its horror. But Dryden's most extensive work in poetical translation was his English version of Virgil, which will always be regarded as one of the standard monuments of our literature. We have said that, in this case, the translator was eminently fitted for his task; but, if his own style was in its majesty truly Virgilian, it lacked something of Virgilian grace and elegance. Nevertheless, although impetuous, it was never exactly rugged; and his recorded lamentation that he had not chosen Homer as his original was founded, albeit with a certain justice, upon a too keen sense, an exaggerated consciousness, of his imperfections in this line. He might have done better with Homer, but he did very well with an author whom he knew thoroughly. On the other hand, it is certain that Pope would have been far better suited to Virgil than to Homer.

Dryden's "Fables": his Chaucerian paraphrases.

§ 10. The highest qualities of Dryden's genius are visible to the end—it never blazed out with greater splendour than when it was about to set in the grave. His *Fables*, as he called them (although they are in no sense fables, but rather tales in verse), display all his noblest qualities, and are in general free from his defect of occasional coarseness. His own preface informs us that "for these reasons of time, and resemblance of genius in Chaucer and Boccace, I resolved to join them in my present work; to which I have added some original papers of my own." In his scheme of Chaucerian paraphrase he included *Palamon and Arcite* (the Knight's Tale), *The Wife of Bath's Tale*, *The Cock and the Fox* (the Nun's Priest's Tale), and *The Flower and the Leaf*, as well as an adaptation of the character of the good parson; while from Boccaccio he took the stories of *Sigismonda and Guiscardo*, *Theodore and Honoria*, and *Cymon and Iphigenia*. These works are for the most part of considerable length; and Chaucer's English is, of course, modernised and freely treated. It is curious to see how

Dryden, with all his deep and sincere veneration for Chaucer—"as he is the father of English poetry, so I hold him in the same degree of veneration as the Grecians held Homer, or the Romans Virgil"—has failed to reproduce the more delicate and subtle qualities of his model. Its splendour, its force, its picturesqueness, are indeed there; but its tender *naïveté*, its almost infantine pathos, have quite evaporated, like some subtle perfume, in the process of transfusion. How far this is to be attributed to Dryden's own character—always deficient in tenderness—how far to the general tone of the age in which he lived, an age the very antipodes of sentiment, it is difficult to decide. "Chaucer," he says himself, "is a rough diamond, and must first be polished ere he shines"; and again, speaking of general opinion on the point, "Some people . . . look on Chaucer as a dry, old-fashioned wit, not worthy reviving. I have often heard the late Earl of Leicester say that Mr. Cowley himself was of that opinion." It must be remembered that Cowley's passionless, classical talent had a great influence on Dryden, and was originally responsible for his work as a translator. Doubtless, Chaucer's archaic language has much to do with the evanescent and subtle fragrance of his work; it is certain that all who have attempted to modernise that work have in a greater or less degree encountered the same insuperable difficulty, the same necessary diminution of tenderness. And this is peculiarly obvious in such passages of Dryden as Arcite's dying speech, and in many traits of the portrait of the parson, to whom Dryden has communicated quite a modern air. It follows that these narratives, to produce their full effect, should be read as independent works of Dryden, without reference either to Chaucer or to Boccaccio; in which case they cannot fail to excite the liveliest admiration. The flowing ease with which the story is told, the frequent occurrence of beautiful lines and happy expressions, will ever make them perhaps the most favourable specimens of Dryden's peculiar merits. He gave them to the public with a pathetic but sturdy vindication of his years. "I have the excuse of an old gentleman, who, mounting on horseback before some ladies, when I was present, got up somewhat heavily, but desired of the fair spectators that they would count fourscore and eight before they judged him. By the mercy of God, I am already come within twenty years of his number, a cripple in my limbs; but what decays are in my mind, the reader must determine."

Individual character of these paraphrases.

§ 11. "Thoughts," he says in the same place, "come crowding on so fast upon me, that my only difficulty is to choose or to reject; to run them into verse, or to give them the other harmony of prose. I have so long studied and practised both, that they are grown into a habit, and become familiar to me." His prose, as a matter of fact, is of great value, not only for the style, but in many instances also for the matter. It is generally found in the form of essays or

3. His prose.

prefaces prefixed to his various poems, and discussing some subject in connection with the particular matter in hand. We have mentioned his *Essay on Dramatic Poesy* and its defence of rhymed tragedy. His *Juvenal* was accompanied by a most amusing treatise on Satire; and, indeed, few of his poetical works appeared without some prose disquisition. In this way he travelled over a vast field of critical enquiry, and gave us valuable appreciations of the poets of his own and other countries. He must be regarded as the first enlightened English critic. In his rambling style of preface he followed, as he confesses, "the practice of honest Montaign," but he is far more of the genuine critic, a creature of judgment rather than of temperament. His pronouncements on Chaucer, Shakespeare, and his mighty contemporary, Milton, and a host of other authors, do equal honour to the catholicity of his taste and the courage with which he expressed his opinions. His decisions may, indeed, be sometimes erroneous, but they are always founded upon reflection, and their groundwork is at least specious if not solid. These works are, besides, admirable specimens of lively, vigorous, idiomatic English, of which no one, if he chose to avoid the occasional pedantry of employing fashionable French words, could be a greater master. His dedications to great and influential patrons, however little honour they may do to his own independence of character, are singularly ingenious and well-turned; and, in judging the tone of servility which these compositions display, we must not forget that it was the fashion of the time, and that a professional author, who lived by his pen, could hardly afford to sacrifice his interest to an assertion of dignity comprehensible to nobody at that time. Whatever prose he wrote is well worthy of study; his humour is to be found in the preface to *Absalom and Achitophel*; his sound judgment in the preface to the *Fables*; and in everything is apparent that inexhaustible energy of style whose impatient rapidity is its distinctive characteristic and possession.

His prefaces.

Their style.

§ 12. Literature presents no personality more original than that of JOHN BUNYAN, the greatest of all masters of allegory. He was born, in 1628, at the village of Elstow, close to Bedford. His father was a tinker, and he himself, in his youth, followed the same humble calling. Although born in almost the lowest rank of society, and, consequently, enjoying no further education than the mere elements of reading and writing, he had before him the example of piety and morality. At the age of sixteen he entered the military service, most probably in the Parliamentary army. His strange and interesting religious autobiography, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* (1666), gives a curious picture of his internal struggles, his despair, his conversion, and his acceptance by God; and the whole range of mystical literature offers no more

JOHN BUNYAN (1628–1688).

Revelations in "Grace Abounding."

touching confession. Its sincerity and spiritual exaltation may be profitably compared with the facile avowals of those "human documents" which penitents of the stamp of Robert Greene have written too easily. Like all enthusiasts, Bunyan much exaggerates the sinfulness of his original state; the peace and confidence in divine mercy, which he attained at the price of mental agony and the risk of completely losing his reason, form a rather too striking contrast with the gloom and despair of his condition before conversion. This and his unswerving reliance in the miraculous nature of the change are sufficient evidence of the natural strength of the feelings, and ally him closely to the group of earlier writers from whom, in point of dogmatic opinion, he considerably differed. It is certain that the irregularities which he deplores were venial, if not altogether trifling, and that his conduct was, in the main, always virtuous and moral. He married very young, and his worst vices appear to have been a habit of swearing, a taste for ale-drinking and for the pastime—always so popular among the English peasantry—of bell-ringing, and for playing at hockey or tip-cat. After a painful experience of those fearful internal struggles habitual to strongly imaginative and impressionable minds when they are first brought under religious conviction, he joined, in 1653, the Baptist society, one of the most enthusiastic of those innumerable Calvinistic sects which were daily springing up in England. The fervour of his piety and the rude eloquence of his discourses soon attracted notoriety. He was himself deeply sincere; his disposition was benevolent and loving; he was intensely eager to communicate to others those "glad tidings of great joy" which, as he imagined, had been divinely brought home to his own soul; and this religious ardour, combined with his powerful genius, must have given him a vast power over the humble enthusiasts who composed his congregations.

Bunyan becomes a Baptist.

At the time of the Restoration the Government began to persecute the dissenting sects with extreme severity. These were, in most cases, identified with the political doctrines of the recently overthrown Commonwealth. Of course, the Baptists were implicated, and Bunyan, as a leading man among them, was necessarily exposed to these trials. He was convicted of upholding and frequenting conventicles, and was imprisoned for upwards of twelve years in the gaol of Bedford. During this long confinement, the rigour of which, however, was gradually much relaxed towards its close, he supported himself by making tagged laces, and, meanwhile, acquired the reverence of his companions by the benevolence with which he consoled them, and by the fervour of his religious exhortations. In prison, too, he enjoyed the society of his little blind daughter, of whom he was passionately fond; and it was during his imprisonment that he composed his immortal allegory, *The*

Persecution and imprisonment of Bunyan.

Pilgrim's Progress. In the last year of this durance, when he was frequently allowed to leave the gaol, he was chosen preacher of the Baptist congregation in Bedford. The persecution of the sects was gradually relaxed under the Stewart rule. The influence of the Duke of York (afterwards James II) contributed to a general toleration, under which he hoped to relieve insensibly the proscription weighing upon the Romanists.

His release and death.

With this new change in feeling came Bunyan's liberation, and he soon became a venerated and influential leader in his sect, preaching frequently both in Bedford and London. His sufferings, his virtues, his genius as a writer, his eloquence as a pastor, all contributed to his fame. In 1688 he died in London. The cause of his death is characteristic of his admirable and unworldly nature. He had made a journey through drenching summer showers to reconcile a father and a son who had quarrelled, and he caught a heavy cold in consequence. He was essentially mild and affectionate, and was animated by a truly evangelical love to all men. His kindness and indulgence freed him from any narrow-minded sectarian jealousy; and, although he was a leading member of a most fanatic and enthusiastic persuasion, he exhibited a rare example of Christian charity and a truly catholic love for all mankind. Yet, in spite of the real mildness and gentleness of his character, his external manners and appearance, as he has himself recorded, had something austere and forbidding; but this was only apparent, and, apart from a few of those childish and almost technical scruples as to matters really indifferent, which may be called the badges of sectarian societies, Bunyan showed none of that sour and peevish narrowness which is their vice. This is as honourable to him as it is extraordinary in itself, when we reflect upon his limited education and upon the almost irresistible tendency of his circumstances.

His character.

§ 13. The works of Bunyan are numerous; but there are only three among them upon which it will be necessary for us to dwell.

"Grace Abounding" (1666).

These are the religious autobiography to which we have already alluded, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, and the two religious allegories, *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *The Holy War*. In *Grace Abounding*, Bunyan gives the most minute and candid account of his own spiritual struggles and conversion. It is a book in which the personal element is largely blended with the mystic; and, in originality, human interest, and elaborate detail of introspective analysis, it is not inferior to the *Confessions* of Rousseau. It is, indeed, infinitely superior; for Bunyan is not a sentimentalist, posing to himself and his friends, but is an intensely earnest man, convinced, as few ever are, of his sinfulness, and eager to communicate his remedy to the world; and his style, in consequence, is not artificial and fatiguing, but natural, simple, and exhilarating. He lays bare to us all the recesses of his heart,

and admits us to the tremendous spectacle of a human soul in unspeakable agonies, freeing itself from the bonds of sin and worldliness. The criminality of his unregenerate state is, as we have hinted, very much exaggerated; and, evidently, the enthusiasm of his character has intensified the lights and shades of the picture, although in perfect simplicity and good faith. The book, however, will never fail to attract the devout student and the philosopher whose interest concentrates itself on the mysterious problems of human nature. The gloom and the sunshine, the despair and the triumph, are all reflected in Bunyan's simple and fervid language. The whole work abounds with those little, inimitable touches of natural feeling and description which have placed its author among the most picturesque of writers.

§ 14. But it is in his allegories that Bunyan stands without a rival, and particularly in *The Pilgrim's Progress.* This book is divided into two parts, the first of which is beyond comparison the finer, and narrates the struggles, experiences, and trials of a Christian in his passage from a life of sin to everlasting felicity. "Mr. Christian," a dweller in the City of Destruction, is incited by the consciousness of his lost state, which is typified by a heavy burthen, to take a journey to the New Jerusalem—the city of eternal life. Every adventure of his travel, the Slough of Despond and the lightnings of Mount Sinai; every scene which he visits, the House Beautiful and the Interpreter's House; every enemy he combats, Apollyon or the giants; all the friends and fellow-pilgrims whom he meets, like Pliable or Faithful, are typical, with a strange mixture of literal simplicity and profound imagination, of the vicissitudes of religious experience. Shakespeare is not more essentially the prince of dramatists than Bunyan is the prince of allegorists. His intellectual vision was so intense that abstract qualities are instantly clothed by him with personality, and we sympathise with his shadowy personages as with real human beings. His scenes, in their beauty or their terror, are real to us; they captivate our memory. The joys and sufferings of Christian and Faithful are ours, irrespective of our age or intelligence. Dante possesses something of the same power in making us realise his conceptions, in giving them an actual identity; but his method was to take real human beings, and, placing them in extraordinary positions, to maintain their real personality. Bunyan, on the other hand, identifies abstract and imaginary qualities, vividly personifying them and clothing them with flesh and blood. Spenser is a great master of allegory; but it is not with his persons that we interest ourselves so much as with their brilliant and picturesque circumstances and accessories. We feel no very lively anxiety about the fate of the Red-cross Knight, Una, Malbecco, or Britomart; we follow their adventures with interest and curiosity, just as we follow the unfolding incidents of a

"The Pilgrim's Progress" (1678).

Its supremacy among allegories.

dramatic spectacle; but we feel far less interest in their fate than in the fate of the actors after the fall of the curtain. But our sympathy is completely with Bunyan's *dramatis personæ*; with some of us it may be equal to our first sympathy with Robinson Crusoe. This result is, in a very high degree, due to Bunyan's simple, unassuming style, and to his own intense belief in his characters and their adventures. This second, which is true of all great creators, is never more true than in this case; for in Christian there can be absolutely no doubt that Bunyan drew from his own character and experience. *The Pilgrim's Progress* is a full exposition, couched in imaginary and impersonal terms, of those principles whose operation we have seen in *Grace Abounding*.

Its popularity was immediate and immense; it has continued to the present day, and the tale still has its wonderful fascination for children and peasants. It has taken its place upon the cottage bookshelf, between the Bible and the almanac. The success of the first part encouraged Bunyan to publish a continuation, in which the wife and children of Christian, escorted by the valiant Greatheart, follow him over nearly the same ground and meet with nearly similar adventures. The great event of this sequel is Greatheart's conquest of Giant Despair; but in charm it is, on the whole, vastly inferior to the first part. The invention displayed is still remarkable, but the freshness of the journey has worn off. However, there are still the same places and the same persons who have delighted or terrified us before, and no visit to them can be made without pleasure and the luxury of reminiscence. Not the least satisfaction to be derived from the pilgrimage is the knowledge that Bunyan embodied his allegorical meanings in scenes and characters which are faithful reflections of contemporary life—the very things and people whom the Puritan zealot would have to encounter in his hard journey from this world to the next. His description of Vanity Fair, many of his fine and vivid landscapes, and a large number of his personages and dialogues, bear evident marks of being transcripts from his actual experience. The agitated times in which the book was written were abundant in strongly-marked characters, good and bad; and we may accept, for instance, the life-like scene of the accusation before the court of justice as a faithful picture of the brutality and the corruption which marked the tribunals of those evil days. In addition, Bunyan's sense of humour was particularly lively, and the comic element which runs through many of the dialogues and adventures, although chastened by the writer's intense seriousness of purpose, adds immensely to the interest and value of the book. The sublime, the grotesque, the tender, the terrible, and the humorous, all appealed to Bunyan's insatiable and popular genius. It is this popularity which,

Sequel to "Pilgrim's Progress" (1684).

Practical character of the allegory.

Bunyan's sense of humour.

perhaps, marks him off most definitely from everyone else. In the largeness of his nature, in his forcible, picturesque idiom, he perfectly sympathises with the people; and he has expressed their sentiments in their own natural tongue. His knowledge of books was very small; but the English version of the Bible, in which our language attains its highest force and perfection, had been studied by him so intently that he was completely saturated with its spirit. He wrote unconsciously in its style, and the innumerable mosaic of Scripture quotations which incrusts his work harmonises with the general tissue of his language and suggests no real incongruity. Beyond the Bible, his books were probably Fox's *Book of Martyrs* and some of those popular legends of knights-errant, which, like *The Seven Champions of Christendom*, have always been favourites with the English peasantry. From these he may have gathered subsidiary materials, but the Bible was the only book from which he constantly borrowed, and he is reported to have known it almost by heart.

His popularity.

His reading.

With such intellectual training, applied to a mind naturally sensitive and enthusiastic, the style of a writer might be rude, harsh, and sometimes even ungrammatical, but it was sure to be perfectly free from vulgarity and meretricious ornament; and Bunyan is the most perfect representative of the plain, vigorous, idiomatic, sometimes picturesque and poetical language of the common people. His style has a masculine breadth and solidity of its own. Its architecture, so to speak, is of the plainest and most robust Anglo-Saxon type; its primitive combination of rugged stone and imperishable heart of oak gives earnest of eternal duration. Its diction is universally drawn from the early Teutonic element in our language; for pages together we meet with nothing but monosyllabic and dissyllabic words; and, with the exception of a few theological terms, his structure is built up of the solid granite that lies at the bottom of our speech. Of course it was impossible that the allegory should always be consistently maintained. In a work of such length the spiritual type could not always be kept distinct from the bodily antitype; but the reader, carried forward by the vivacity of the narrative, seldom meets with any difficulty from this cause. The long spiritual discussions, expositions of theological questions, and exhortations addressed by one speaker to the others, not only afford curious specimens of the religious composition of those days, but increase the verisimilitude of the persons concerned. These passages, too, show Bunyan's profound acquaintance with the language, and with that which he and his friends judged to be the spirit, of Holy Scripture, and place his benevolent Christianity in the strongest light. In the matter of description he is equally powerful, whether the object he paints be terrible or attractive. The Valley of

His style.

Digressions in theology.

the Shadow of Death is put before us with the same astonishing realism as the Delectable Mountains—a contrast whose minuteness of detail strongly recalls the Hell and Paradise of Dante. No religious writer has analysed more minutely or represented more faithfully every phase of feeling through which the soul passes in its struggle with sin; the clearness of these pictures is rather increased than diminished by the allegorical dress which they wear. Bunyan, we have said, drew in them upon the resources of his own memory and experience. He exhibits, too, that characteristic inseparable from the higher order of creative power—a constant sympathy with the simpler objects of external nature, and a preference for the great fundamental elements of human character as opposed to its merely episodical and accidental details—that delight in portraying the "absolute man" which filled the spirit of the Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists.

Bunyan's realism.

§ 15. *The Holy War* is an allegory which typifies, in the siege and capture of the city of Mansoul, the struggle between sin and religion in the human spirit. Diabolus on the one hand, and Immanuel upon the other, are the leaders of the opposing armies. This military narrative shows frequent traces of Bunyan's personal experience in warfare, gained during his service with Cromwell's stout and godfearing army. As a tale, *The Holy War* is far less interesting than *The Pilgrim's Progress*, for our sympathies are no longer concentrated upon the dangers and escapes of a single hero, and in many points the allegory is too refined and complicated to be followed readily and closely. And, perhaps as a natural consequence of this, the style is less fresh and animated. But *The Holy War* has its own defenders. After all, the excellence of an allegory depends upon its conception and not upon its tale; and the conception of *The Holy War* is the finest possible. The difference which remains is a question of the relative complexity of the two allegories; and here it will be found that, while *The Holy War*, in its subtlety, appeals to the few, the directness of *The Pilgrim's Progress* finds favour with the many.

"The Holy War" (1682).

§ 16. One of the most prominent figures in the Long Parliament and at the time of the Restoration was EDWARD HYDE, who is better known as Chancellor of England and EARL OF CLARENDON. His importance is double, for he was not only an actor in the political drama of that momentous period, but also the historian of those events in which he had taken part; and his annals of the epoch give him an honourable place among English historical writers. He was descended from a gentle stock, and was educated at Magdalen Hall, Oxford. At first he proceeded to the bar, but soon abandoned his profession for the more exciting struggles of political life. He was elected for Wootton Bassett, and sat in the Short Parliament of 1640, as a member

LORD CLARENDON (1609–1674).

of the moderate party, in opposition to the Court, and, in the same year, as member for Saltash, became a conspicuous orator in the Long Parliament, at first supporting Opposition principles. But, after a violent quarrel with the more advanced adherents of the national cause, he gradually passed over to the Royalist side, and identified himself with it so completely that he came to an open rupture with the constitutional party. Finding himself in imminent danger of arrest, he fled from London and joined the King at York (1642). From this time he must be reckoned among the most faithful, but the most moderate, leaders of the Royalist cause. In 1645 he was appointed a member of the council which was chosen to advise and take charge of the Prince. He accompanied his young master to Jersey, and shared all the vicissitudes of his exile, from the execution of Charles I to the Restoration of 1660. All through the Commonwealth and Protectorate he remained abroad, generally in close attendance upon the exiled prince, in whose disreputable little court he must have been something of an anomaly. His advice, at any rate, had it been followed by Charles and his companions, would have probably spared them much disgrace and many embarrassments. He was rewarded with the title—then but an empty name—of Chancellor, and was employed from time to time in diplomatic service. His chief mission (1649–50) was to the court of Madrid, with the object of inducing a concert of European cabinets and exciting an intervention in favour of the exiled House of Stewart. Hyde was, however, unsuccessful. Cromwell's power was feared too strongly to make any overt action on behalf of the Stewarts a practical matter, and Spain gave nothing but her sympathy. During this time of banishment, Hyde, like many of his companions, and like Charles himself in his wanderings through France and Holland, had to suffer frequent poverty and privation. But at last the time came when the great structure of Cromwell's power fell, and, in the frenzy of triumph that greeted the Restoration, the Chancellor reaped the reward of his services.

His loyalty to the Stewart cause.

His career after the Restoration.

He was regularly installed in his office, was created, first a baron, and afterwards, in 1661, Earl of Clarendon, and was for some time among the most powerful advisers of the Court. His popularity, however, soon began to decline; his virtues and his faults were just then both against him; and he gradually lost favour with the King. The gravity and austerity of his morals were in direct contradiction to the chartered profligacy of the Court; his advice, generally recommending prudence and economy, could not fail to be distasteful to the spendthrift Charles, who, in addition, disliked his Chancellor's tedious lectures. Like many statesmen who have returned to power after a long exile, he was behind the times, and was unable to accommodate himself to the altered state of opinion. At

the same time, the people looked with envy and distrust upon the great wealth which he was accumulating—not always by the most scrupulous means—and upon the spirit of nepotism which was making the family of Hyde one of the richest and most splendid in the country. The magnificence of his palaces and gardens caused additional offence. But when, as the keystone, it would almost seem, of his ambition, a secret marriage between his daughter Anne and the heir-apparent, the Duke of York, was divulged, the popular displeasure reached its highest pitch, and the nation murmured at an alliance between a family risen, as everyone remembered, from the rank of country gentry, and the royal house. By this marriage Clarendon became the grandfather of two queens of England, Mary II and Anne. His unpopularity was completed by his share in a measure which excited an intense feeling of national humiliation. He advised Charles to sell Dunkirk to Louis XIV (1662). Popular opinion jumped to the not unjustifiable conclusion that he had received a share in the proceeds of this disgraceful compact; his splendid palace in London received the bitter nickname of "Dunkirk House"; and, as Charles, even if he had been personally attached to Clarendon, was not the man to sacrifice an atom of popularity for the purpose of screening a minister, the unfortunate statesman, in 1667, was impeached for high treason and had to go once more into exile. He passed the rest of his life in France, and died at Rouen in 1674.

His unpopularity and fall.

§ 17. Clarendon was the author of many state papers and other official documents, in which his style shows a grave and dignified eloquence; but his great work is the *History of the Great Rebellion*, or, as the historical justice of later generations has christened it, the Civil War. This review of events includes a detailed account, set in the form of memoirs rather than of regular history, of the proceedings from 1625 to 1644, together with a narrative of the incidents which led to the Restoration. As the materials were derived from the author's personal experience, the work is of high value, and is the great authentic history of the period by a contemporary. The dignity and liveliness of the style, in spite of occasional obscurity, place the work in the very forefront of English histories; and, to use a rough analogy, Clarendon, in the matter of style, is the Gibbon of the seventeenth century. We cannot expect him to be impartial; no great historian has ever been without his theory to defend. But the partiality that we might have fairly anticipated would have been more frequent and more flagrant. The moderation of his character occasionally led him to hesitate between two conclusions, and his partiality, even where it comes under conviction, is more negatively than positively unfair. He set himself the task of treating a series of numerous

The "History of the Great Rebellion" (published 1702–4).

Its style and moderate tone.

and complex events, and, in so doing, he was guilty of a much smaller number of serious inaccuracies than could have been supposed. Above all, he is excellent in his delineation of character. His portraits are the most carefully elaborate part of his work, and they are nearly always distinguished by his penetrative judgment and his skill in depicting the varieties of human nature with which he met.

§ 18. From the Puritan allegorist and the Cavalier historian we come to a character which, in its literary and personal tranquillity, must always excite our admiration and envy. The life of IZAAK WALTON almost bridges over the wide span between the age of Elizabeth and the Revolution. He was born at Stafford in 1593, and passed his early manhood in London, where he was an ironmonger, with a shop in Fleet Street. When he was about fifty, he was able to retire from trade, probably with enough capital to satisfy his modest desires, and lived till the great age of ninety in ease and tranquillity, enjoying the friendship of many of the most learned and accomplished men of his time, and amusing himself with literature and his favourite pastime of fishing. His second wife was a half-sister of Bishop Ken, and his greatest personal friends were men like Donne, Hales, Wotton, Chillingworth, Sanderson, and Ussher. The peculiar modesty and simplicity of his character ripened such acquaintances into solid friendships, and the result of some of these intimacies may be seen in the *Lives*, which he produced at different times, of Donne, Wotton, Hooker, Herbert, and Bishop Sanderson. Three, at least, of these he had known very well. These biographies are unlike anything else in literature; their tenderness, their grateful simplicity, the unaffected fervour of their personal attachment and unalloyed piety, give them the reputation of masterpieces, not only as biographies, but as books of devotion. But Walton's great work is his *Complete Angler*, a treatise on his favourite art of fishing, in which his precepts for the sport are combined with inimitable descriptions of English river scenery and charming dialogues. Walton's devotional habit of mind is still apparent here in his prevailing tone of gratitude for God's goodness; and all these characteristics render the work absolutely unique in literature. Our English passion for all kinds of field sports and open-air amusements is closely connected with a sensible appreciation of natural beauty; and the calm scenes of the home counties, their quiet rivers, like the Lea at Broxbourne, and their daisied meadows, are faithfully reflected with a loving truth in Walton's descriptions. The treatise, with a quaint gravity that adds to its charm, is thrown into a series of dialogues, first between Piscator, Venator, and Auceps—the fisher, the hunter, and the fowler—each of whom in turn proclaims the superiority of his favourite sport; and

IZAAK WALTON (1593–1683).

Walton's "Lives."

"The Complete Angler" (1653).

afterwards between Piscator and Venator. The sportsman is convinced by the angler, and becomes his disciple. Mixed up with technical precepts, now become a little obsolete, are an infinite number of descriptions of angling days, and digressions into that sympathetic admiration of nature and that pious philosophy which make Walton one of the most eloquent teachers of virtue and religion. The style is as pure and graceful as the sentiment; and a little touch, now and then, of old-fashioned pedantry only adds to the indefinable fascination of the work, breaking up its monotony like a ripple upon the sunny surface of a stream. No other literature has any book like *The Complete Angler*, and its popularity seems likely to last as long as the language. A second part was added by CHARLES COTTON (see p. 262), a clever poet, the friend and adopted son of Izaak, and his rival in the passion for angling. This continuation is, indeed, like the sequel to *The Pilgrim's Progress*, inferior to its predecessor; but it breathes the same spirit, and, like it, contains many beautiful and simple lyrics in praise of the art.

Cotton's sequel to "The Complete Angler" (1676).

§ 19. From Izaak Walton our thoughts turn without any great effort to that other lover of nature and example to his fellows, the virtuous, modest, and accomplished JOHN EVELYN, whose work unites a singular practical usefulness with a great charm and ease of style. He was a gentleman of good family, and, as his fortune was considerable, he was able to distribute his time between literature and philosophy and the pleasures of rural life. As Walton was an angler, so Evelyn was a gardener, and his principal works deal with the art of gardening and planting. *Sylva* (1664) is a treatise upon the nature and management of forest-trees, to whose precepts, as well as to the practical example of Evelyn himself, the country is indebted for its abundance of magnificent timber. In this work, as well as in *Terra*, which deals with gardening and agriculture, we see not only the author's sound common-sense, but his sensibility to his natural surroundings, his benevolence of heart, and his profound and manly piety. In his love for his garden he is the worthy successor of Bacon and predecessor of Shenstone. He also left a diary, giving a minute account of the state of society in his time, and describing the incredible infamy and corruption of Charles II's Court, through whose abominations his pure and gentle spirit passed, like the lady in *Comus*, amid the bestial rout of the enchanter. He was an eye-witness of the great fire of London in 1665, and his description of it is the most detailed, as well as the most trustworthy and picturesque account of that awful calamity. Of course, we put out of court Defoe's long description, which must be regarded merely as realistic fiction and not as a historical document. Evelyn had a country house at Deptford, called Sayes Court, which was chosen as Peter the Great's temporary

JOHN EVELYN (1620–1706).

His "Diary" (*published* 1818–19).

residence during his visit to England; and Evelyn gives a lamentable account of the dirt and devastation caused in the house and its beautiful garden by the barbarian monarch and his suite. Indeed, he obtained compensation from Government for the injury done to his property. His diary, as well as his other works, abounds in traits of personal character. He was a keen topographer, and his notes upon the places he visited, the houses he saw—and, of course, their gardens—give the diary the character of a pleasant guide-book, written by an extremely cultivated and well-informed gentleman. He, his family, and his friends seem to have been, as it were, an oasis of piety, virtue, and refinement amid the wilderness of corruption and ignorance which was represented by the higher society of those days, and his writings will always retain the double interest derived from his own virtues and from the fidelity with which they delineate a curious social phase in our national history.

His character.

§ 20. The other great diarist of the age is that very original, amusing, and singular person, the artless SAMUEL PEPYS. His family was old but poor, and his father was for some time a tailor. He himself went to Magdalene College, Cambridge, and took his Master's degree in 1660. During his whole life he retained an almost ludicrous passion for fine clothes, which he is never weary of describing with more delight than is usual with even the most successful man-milliner. By the protection of his father's cousin, Sir Edward Montagu, he was placed in a subordinate office in the Admiralty, and by his punctuality, honesty, and knowledge of business, rose to the important post of secretary to that department. He remained in this office many years, and must be considered as almost the only honest and able official who had anything to do with the naval administration during the reigns of Charles II and James II. In Charles' time the marine service was reduced, by the corruption of the Court, to the lowest degree of inefficiency and degradation. James was, however, by profession a seaman—we can get some idea of his ability by liberally discounting from the praise in Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis*. It has been the fashion of historians to speak of James II with a studied contempt and horror; his administration, nevertheless, included a sincere attempt to improve the condition of the fleet. Pepys' honesty and activity contributed to this object, and, after acquiring a sufficient fortune without any serious imputation on his integrity, the old secretary retired from the service into well-earned ease. During the whole of his long and active career he had amused himself by writing down, day after day, in a sort of cipher or shorthand, a diary of everything he saw, did, or thought. He left this manuscript, with the rest of his books, to a nephew, after whose death they were to pass, under certain restrictions, to Magdalene College, Cam-

SAMUEL PEPYS (1633–1703).

His post in the Admiralty.

Pepys' "Diary" (published 1825).

bridge. There they eventually arrived, and remain until this day. It was not, however, until the beginning of the nineteenth century that the diary was deciphered by Lord Braybrooke, the visitor of the college, and, since his edition, fresh work has been done in the same quarter, until we are now in possession of the whole work—the most curious piece of self-revelation which any man has ever left behind, the disclosure of a business-like, generous, easy-going, frail, and, in his frank confessions of his weaknesses, sometimes ludicrous type of character. Pepys' graver faults, revealed in some hitherto suppressed portions of the diary, are now well known to the world; they were the common vices of his day, and he had none of that celibate spirit which raised Evelyn above the faults of his time. He was a thorough gossip, inquisitive as an old woman, and had a touch of the antiquary and curiosity-hunter; and he was necessarily brought into contact with all classes of persons, from the King and his ministers down to the half-starved sailors whose pay he had to distribute. He wrote, we may suppose, entirely for himself, and, in so doing, set down every minute detail of his life with ludicrous *naïveté*. He describes at length his general rise to wealth and importance; he notes, in terms of rapturous enthusiasm, every suit of clothes ordered either by himself or his wife; he chronicles every quarrel and reconciliation arising out of Mrs. Pepys' frequent jealousy. Her passion was not unfounded, considering Mr. Pepys' suspicious fondness for the pleasant but profligate society of pretty actresses and singers. The diary is a complete picture of a gay and debauched society. Its simple descriptions bring the whole age before us: the statesmen, courtiers, players, and ladies of pleasure live before our eyes; we see for ourselves the people whom Dryden satirised; we understand the spirit which pervaded the age's literature, the direct outcome of the extraordinary state of society then prevalent. All the minutiæ of dress, manners, and social life are vividly presented to us; it is a chronicle of small beer, but it is just this trivial kind of thing that is necessary to our realisation of history and provides the needed atmosphere. Pepys' own character—an inimitable mixture of shrewdness, vanity, good sense and simplicity—adds infinitely to the relish of his revelations; and his book possesses the interest, not only of the value and curiosity of its matter, but of the colouring given to that matter by the oddity of the writer.

His character.

§ 21. An important branch of writing in this age was the political pamphlet, and one of the earliest and most famous pamphleteers was SIR ROGER L'ESTRANGE, an active hack-writer on behalf of the Royalist party. His diatribes against the opponents of the Court are now almost forgotten, but their peculiar force of slang and vulgar liveliness was then regarded as smart writing. They are full of the familiar expressions then

SIR ROGER L'ESTRANGE (1616–1704) *and the pamphleteers.*

current in society, and, although their taste is not very good, they have a certain fire. He and his fellow-pamphleteers, TOM BROWN (1663–1704), for example, give examples of the always ephemeral nature of the success of that *soi-disant* humorous style which depends for its effect upon employing the current jargon of the town. In every age there are authors who trust to this for their popularity, and their temporary vogue is usually co-extensive with the oblivion to which they are certain to be condemned. L'Estrange has curiously exemplified his mode of writing in his prose paraphrase of Æsop's fables (1692), and his life of that mysterious and legendary ancient is a good specimen of the familiarity which at that time passed for wit.

But the political pamphlet reached a far higher level in the calm style of GEORGE SAVILE, MARQUESS OF HALIFAX, the "Trimmer," who occupies so honourable a place in Macaulay's gallery of statesmen. He came of a Yorkshire family, whose seat was at Thornhill, near Dewsbury. He succeeded to his father's baronetcy in 1644, and in 1660 sat as member for Pontefract. Throughout Charles II's reign he was a prominent figure in the state. In 1668 he was created Baron Savile of Elland and Viscount Halifax; in 1679, on joining Shaftesbury's cabinet, he became an earl, and in 1682, Marquess of Halifax and Lord Privy Seal. He was appointed to and dismissed from the presidency of the Council by James II (1685), and was one of the leading spirits in the Revolution. He returned to office as Lord Privy Seal after the accession of William III, but resigned in February, 1690, and retired to Rufford. He died in April, 1695. It will be seen, from this short sketch of his life, that he was essentially a man of action—a man, too, whose singular breadth of mind kept him from extremities, and led him to be, on his own confession (that is, if he was the real writer of *The Character of a Trimmer*), a man of no party, but a trimmer. "Our Trimmer adores the goddess Truth," he said; and this veneration inspired all his pamphlets, which, as Macaulay said, "well deserve to be studied for their literary merits, and fully entitle him to a place among English classics." Halifax's tracts had always something to do with the questions of the day: in his *Historical Remarks* upon the Edwards and Richard II, he applied past history to modern very much as Machiavelli did in his discourses on Livy. He was eminently a calm and impartial philosopher; something of a freethinker; and a bold patriot. His *Character of Charles II* is perhaps more to the point than those other bygone analogies; it is distinguished by his usual acuteness, and his concluding sentence is entirely typical of his fairness of mind. "Should nobody throw a stone at his faults but those who are free from them, there would be but a slender shower." His collected miscellanies remained in MS. till 1750, when they were published by his granddaughter,

HALIFAX *the "Trimmer"* (1633–1695).

Lady Burlington. He had something of Machiavelli in him, something also which reminds us, in the discreet pomposity of his style, of his contemporary, Sir William Temple. And in his *Advice to a Daughter*, which became for a time a most popular manual of behaviour, he reminds us, as Professor Ward has observed, of his famous grandson, the fourth Earl of Chesterfield.

Characteristics of post-Restoration prose.

§ 22. In Halifax's style we have a very clear example of the prose of the century. The poetry of the Restoration speaks for itself; it is comprehended in the single name of Dryden, which marks the noble transition from the style of which Cowley was the last lingering exponent to the style of Pope—for Milton stands by himself. It is impossible to overrate the importance of Dryden; for in his prose, as in his poetry, we discern the change in style, the abandonment of the lyric spirit for something more sober and prosaic—in short, the establishment of a new criterion. We have seen the noblest examples of Elizabethan prose (using the term Elizabethan as general) in Jeremy Taylor and in Milton, the second of whom preserved the traditions of the classic age of English literature down to a very late period. But the troubles of the Civil War put an end to the audacity of these lyric flights: with the Commonwealth came an age of action, and the age of fine words and rapturous sentences passed away; the Restoration, with its materialism, its absence of ideals, and its preference for statecraft, swept away the last remnants of that era. In Bunyan we have the characteristic writer of the Commonwealth, clear and simple, making his points with a strength which avoids any circumlocution; in Dryden we have the typical product of the Restoration, a man of sound worldly judgment, a critic whose first attention is to what he says, and his second to how he says it. The cumbrous period, stocked with parenthesis and embellished with epithet, disappeared; the short, pithy sentence took its place. The whole spirit of literature became matter-of-fact; style, regarded for its own sake, became merely neatness, and the compact medium of thought. It remained so for a great many years to come—easy, graceful, devoid of superfluous ornament, and, in writers like Halifax, Temple, Chesterfield, and South, eminently self-complacent. In a word, just as the style of the sixteenth century continues well into the seventeenth, so the style of the seventeenth century overlaps that of the eighteenth. We shall speak immediately of the same transition in its relation to drama, while the divines, *philosophes*, and statesmen of William and Mary's reign will bear witness to the complete change effected by this most important epoch in the history of English politics and thought.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

OTHER WRITERS.

DR. WALTER CHARLETON (1619–1707) was physician to Charles II, and President of the Royal College of Physicians. He was a man of science and a theologian, a philosopher and an antiquarian. His works, chiefly medical, are very numerous, and many of them are translated into English or Latin. He was among the first who accounted for the differences in men's minds by the size and form of the brain.

THOMAS CREECH (1659–1700) published (1682) a translation of Lucretius in heroic verse. Creech was a fellow of All Souls and a scholar, and his version of a poet not very popular with translators kept the field for many years. It acted also as an incentive to Dryden in writing his *Virgil*. Creech's personal history was somewhat unhappy. Certain eccentricities grew upon him, and, after a brief interval as head-master of Sherborne school, he returned to Oxford, where he committed suicide in 1700.

CHARLES MONTAGU, EARL OF HALIFAX (1661–1715), was a great patron of letters during the reigns of William III and Anne, and befriended Addison among others. He himself wrote some poems, but most often his name appeared on the early pages of authors' works, "fed with soft dedication all day long." He assisted Prior in *The Town and Country Mouse*. He rose to great distinction as a politician in the reign of William III, when he filled the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer. His recall of the coinage (1695) in that capacity is one of the great financial operations of history; and he received the reward of his services in a peerage (1699). He took his title out of respect to the memory of George Savile, Marquess of Halifax, the "Trimmer." (See p. 335.)

JOHN OLDHAM (1653–1683) made some reputation as a satirist with his *Satires on the Jesuits* (1679–80); and, after his death, when a volume of his *Remains* was published (1684), was honoured by an eulogy from Dryden and the title of the "Marcellus of our tongue." He was of poor birth, and, after leaving St. Edmund Hall, Oxford, became an usher in Archbishop Whitgift's school at Croydon. Afterwards he became a tutor in two or three families, and died at his patron, Lord Kingston's, house of Holme Pierrepoint in Nottinghamshire.

WILLIAM WALSH (1663–1708), member of Parliament for Worcestershire from 1698 to 1705, was a critic, scholar, and patron of literary men. He himself published some fugitive pieces. Wycherley introduced Pope to him, and Pope writes of his critical skill:—

> "But why then publish? Granville the polite,
> And knowing Walsh, would tell me I could write."

ANNE FINCH, COUNTESS OF WINCHILSEA (1660–1720), although her *Nocturnal Reverie* was previously known, is, speaking loosely, a discovery of the present century. Her Pindaric ode on *The Spleen* was published separately in 1709, having appeared previously in 1701, and, in 1713, she brought out a volume of *Miscellaneous Poems*. Wordsworth said that, between *Paradise Lost* and Thomson's *Seasons*, there is not a "single new image" of external nature, "except in Pope's *Windsor Forest*, and Lady Winchilsea's *Nocturnal Reverie*. She was the daughter of Sir William Kingsmill of Sidmonton, near Southampton, and married Heneage, fourth Earl of Winchilsea

CHAPTER XIII.

THE RESTORATION DRAMATISTS AND POETS.

§ 1. Contrast between Elizabethan and Restoration drama. Tragedy. § 2. Restoration comedy. § 3. SIR GEORGE ETHEREGE. § 4. WILLIAM WYCHERLEY: *The Country Wife* and *The Plain Dealer*. § 5. SIR JOHN VANBRUGH. § 6. GEORGE FARQUHAR. § 7. Life of WILLIAM CONGREVE. § 8. His comedies: *Love for Love* and *The Way of the World*. § 9. Congreve as a tragic writer: *The Mourning Bride*. § 10. Tragic writers of the Restoration: THOMAS OTWAY. § 11. NATHANIEL LEE. § 12. THOMAS SOUTHERNE. § 13. NICHOLAS ROWE: *The Fair Penitent*. § 14. Minor dramatists: THOMAS SHADWELL; APHRA BEHN; JOHN CROWNE; GEORGE LILLO and *bourgeois* tragedy. § 15. Poetry of the period. Noble poets: ROSCOMMON; ROCHESTER; SIR CHARLES SEDLEY; the DUKE OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE; DORSET. § 16. JOHN PHILIPS and JOHN POMFRET.

§ 1. THE elements of contrast between the Elizabethan era and the Restoration are nowhere more obvious than in the drama. We have already detected signs of a transition in the work of such writers as Shirley, and these become more pronounced as time advances, until the drama of the Restoration, tragic and comic, is at length fully developed in the plays of Dryden. But, although there is this tendency in the plays (and especially the comedies) of the late Elizabethan writers, the main features of the new drama were due, not to any systematic influence at work in English literature, but to foreign example. The comedy of Wycherley and Congreve, the tragedy of Dryden and Otway, are in the best sense exotic; they owe their life to an external influence; and the natural decay of this outer force explains the sudden death of English drama at the end of the century. History sufficiently explains this phenomenon. In 1642 the theatres were closed by order of Parliament, and, a few years later, came the Commonwealth. The exiled King and his Court, in their continental wanderings, came across an entirely new kind of stage entertainment, something quite different from the romantic and poetical drama of their fathers. When they returned, they brought back its principles with them, and all plays were modelled upon the French pattern. Tragic writers ceased to take an interest in the "absolute man" for his own sake, and devoted themselves

Characteristics of post-Restoration drama.

French influence.

to the study of rhymed declamation, working after the model of Corneille and Racine. The effect, to the modern reader, is weak, commonplace, and artificial. Restoration tragedy (with only one or two exceptions) is devoid of that genuine passion which is the glowing characteristic even of Ford's most unnatural pieces. Its tone is certainly romantic, but with a romance far removed from the reality of common-sense. Its heroes are supernaturally brave; they involve themselves in subtleties of amorous casuistry worthy of the Troubadours; they push the virtue of self-sacrifice to the verge of caricature; and so, in violating all the feelings of nature, attain an impossible ideal of heroic and amorous perfection. Dryden is the chief sinner in this respect, but his great genius covers many of his defects. The real weakness of this type of play is to be seen in Congreve's *Mourning Bride* and Rowe's *Fair Penitent.*

Tragedy: its morbid exaggeration of virtue.

§ 2. Comedy, on the other hand, took exactly the opposite line. While tragedy courted the hopelessly unreal, comedy busied itself with an accurate picture of manners, drawing its material from society and not from nature, and consequently depending on wit rather than humour. This brilliant interlude in our literature is eminently superficial, but, as a picture of contemporary manners, it remains unsurpassed. Its types, its conquering lovers and frail heroines, doubtless had their own reciprocal influence on the morals of their time; their own mimic licence gave fresh encouragement to their originals. The morality of Restoration comedy—if we can speak of such a thing where it is non-existent—is horribly bad; its utter disregard of decency is an entirely different thing from that Rabelaisian coarseness of thought and speech which we find, for example, in Ben Jonson. Macaulay's famous criticisms are only very slightly exaggerated, and any reader with a tender conscience will feel inclined to justify them at every point. Invention was a gift denied to Wycherley and the other comic writers: they adapted brilliantly, and clothed their adaptations in a garment which was covered with dazzling ornaments of wit, but had in every case the same hard texture of monotonous profligacy. Their favourite original was Molière, the prince of comic writers, whose portraits were considerably more than superficial, and have a singular tenderness, purity, and humour of their own. In borrowing, our dramatists transferred certain well-marked characteristics of these heroes and heroines, and, with these, certain striking situations, but wilfully changed the true bearing of everything they borrowed. Virtue became sheer vice, and vice became something unspeakable. It is, however, only fair to remember that this moral brutality is of secondary interest; it is but the groundwork, the atmosphere, of the piece, which we realise without giving it the first place in our thoughts. The prime motive is the ingenious

Comedy: its contemporary value; its lack of morality.

use of stratagem and the corresponding brilliance of dialogue with which each trick and ruse is carried to success. The figures themselves leave us with a very slight impression; our lasting remembrance of them resides in their intrigues and clever devices—their "tricks to catch the old one." The essence of their comedy is the triumph of youth, the lusty Juventus of the old Moralities; the recognition of the law that "crabbed age and youth cannot live together." Mirabel and Dorimant deceive and entrap old fathers and old husbands; and we look on at their schemes with a certain complacency, feeling sure that their butts and dupes have done the same thing before, and that they themselves, after a few years, will fall under the same condemnation.

Subservience of character to intrigue.

This is, briefly speaking, in the arraignment of Restoration comedy, the case for the defendant. It must be acknowledged that he only just escapes a richly deserved sentence. Another wide difference, however, exists between the drama of this age and that of the age preceding. The unadorned stages of the Southwark theatres were become a thing of the past. A taste for splendour of scenery, dances, music and decoration, had usurped the place of that intense truth to life and nature which needed no external help. This change was in some measure the result of expediency. Drama was not revived all of a sudden, but the way for its return was stealthily prepared by exhibitions known as "entertainments" and "operas," which were actually plays interspersed with songs and enlivened by scenery. Thus the mechanical accessories of the stage were immensely improved, and it remained for the French taste, with its classical distinctions between tragedy and comedy, to complete the metamorphosis.

Introduction of scenery.

Sir William D'Avenant is chiefly responsible for the operatic form of play, which he cultivated on his stage at Rutland House during the later years of the Commonwealth. Although his own dramatic talent was very mediocre, and his admiration of Shakespeare did not prevent him from garbling that poet's work in an egregious series of adaptations, he was really the great patron and benefactor of the revived stage; and when, in August 1660, two companies were licensed by royal patent, one of them was his.

D'Avenant and the drama.

But a change in stage mechanism even more radical than the introduction of scenery was the substitution of women instead of boys in the representation of female parts. With the Restoration begins that series of great actresses whose lives and love-affairs are a mine of information upon the social condition and polite history of their age—Mrs. Bracegirdle, Mrs. Oldfield, and the rest.

Alteration in female parts on the stage.

§ 3. Taking the comic writers of the age first, as being infinitely more representative of their time than the tragic authors, we may say the French influence which created the

comedy of manners is first visible, in its full development, in SIR GEORGE ETHEREGE. He was a man of fashion and a courtier, who had been much in Paris, and was therefore acquainted with the French stage. His work begins with a tragi-comedy, *The Comical Revenge*, acted in 1664, which combines rhymed tragic with prose comic scenes. If it did not create an epoch, this play marks a very important point in dramatic history. In 1667 appeared Etherege's second work, a comedy called *She Would if She Could*. Finally, in 1676, came the play to which he owes his reputation—the impersonation of the fashionable coxcomb in *The Man of Mode, or Sir Fopling Flutter*. Dialogue and intrigue are here at their best, and, for the first time, we are face to face with that gaiety and vivacity of style which, in its variety and constant change of expression, reaches its immortal climax in Congreve. Etherege, too, like Congreve, had the good sense to leave the stage at the height of his reputation. He became a diplomatist, and, after occupying a place at the Hague, was sent (1685) as ambassador to Ratisbon, where, it is said, he died of a fall. It is, however, fairly certain that he was forced to leave his post by the Revolution, and died at Paris early in 1691.

SIR GEORGE ETHEREGE (1634?–1691?)

"*Sir Fopling Flutter*" (1676).

§ 4. One of the acknowledged masters in this school was only a few years younger than Etherege, and wrote for the stage at the same time. WILLIAM WYCHERLEY was the son of a country squire whose estate lay seven miles out of Shrewsbury. His father, probably disgusted with the puritanical manners in vogue, sent him to be educated in France, where he associated with the brilliant household of the Duc de Montausier, and joined the Roman communion, less, perhaps, from sincere conviction than from the social advantages attending his change of faith. He returned to England, a polished man of the world, and made his way in the gay and profligate society of his time. Sir Peter Lely's portrait testifies to his remarkable personal beauty. He entered Queen's College, Oxford, at the Restoration, and changed his faith a second time; but, leaving Oxford without a degree, became a member of the Temple, and abandoned himself to the diversions of London life. In his later years he boasted that his plays had been written at a ridiculously early age; but this statement was due to his inordinate vanity, and is denied by the comparison of dates with facts. His first comedy, *Love in a Wood, or Saint James' Park*, was not produced, at any rate, until the spring of 1671, when it was acted at Drury Lane. He was then over thirty. There can be no doubt that he had been a long time over his work: the small number of his productions testifies to his patient labour and revision. His second comedy, *The Gentleman Dancing-Master*, whose main idea was freely borrowed from Calderon's *El Maestro de Danzar*, was performed at the Duke of York's Theatre in Dorset Garden,

WILLIAM WYCHERLEY (1640–1715).

during the winter season of 1671–2. But this piece proved a failure, and is, indeed, infinitely surpassed by *The Country Wife*, acted between 1672 and 1674, and *The Plain Dealer*, which belongs to the spring of 1674. These are both adaptations from Molière, the first taking its motive from *L'École des Maris* and *L'École des Femmes*, and the second from *Le Misanthrope*. *The Country Wife* was published in 1675; *The Plain Dealer* in 1677. During his brilliant social career Wycherley was engaged in many intrigues, the most celebrated of which, his *liaison* with the notorious Duchess of Cleveland, was one result of the performance of *Love in a Wood*. His grace and gaiety attracted the King's notice, and he was selected to superintend the education of Charles' natural son, the young Duke of Richmond. This was just after the publication of *The Plain Dealer*. But, at this fortunate moment, Wycherley lost his head. He met the young and widowed Countess of Drogheda at Tunbridge Wells, fell in love with her, married her secretly, and, when the whole story came out, lost the royal favour. Lady Drogheda proved a jealous wife; and, after her death, her husband fell into distress and remained for seven years a debtor in the Fleet prison. James II, however, liberated him and paid his debts. About this time, too, Wycherley returned to the Church of Rome. The remainder of his life is melancholy and ignoble. He came out of the Fleet into a world whose ways were not those of his youth: the Revolution changed everything. His constitution was broken; his fortune was embarrassed; but he continued to thirst vainly and impotently after sensual pleasure and literary glory. In 1704 he published a large volume of miscellaneous verses, written in the utterly indecent manner of forty years before. It was worthless; but he continued to compose, and enlisted the services of Pope, who was then a mere boy of sixteen, as his reviser and emendator. The result of this curious friendship is to be seen in the miscellaneous collection published after Wycherley's death with the aid of Theobald, in which the old dramatist's stupid and obscene verse is relieved by passages obviously due to Pope. The friendship of the two was only momentary: Wycherley soon complained of Pope's revisions, and the bitter quarrel which followed forms a curious and instructive picture. He quarrelled with his nephew and heir much about the same time, and, in order to cut him out of the succession, married, ten days before his own death, a young girl of sixteen, who afterwards became the wife of a Captain Shrimpton. He died in 1715, and was buried in the vault of St. Paul's, Covent Garden.

Wycherley's success in society.

His marriage and its fatal results.

His later life and association with Pope.

It is by *The Country Wife* and *The Plain Dealer* that posterity has consented to judge Wycherley's dramatic genius. They are the crowning examples of the lack of invention

common to all the Restoration dramatists. They are simply adaptations, and, in adapting, they distort the original. Macaulay says that nothing can more clearly indicate the unspeakable moral corruption of the drama at that epoch, and the degree in which that corruption was exemplied by Wycherley, than the way in which he modified, while he borrowed, the data of Molière. Molière's Agnès, in *L'École des Femmes*, never forfeits our respect; but her counterpart in *The Country Wife*, Mrs. Pinchwife, combines complete ignorance of the world with the most incredible immorality. Molière's lovers are doubtless rakes, but they are gentlemen: Wycherley's Horner is a mere bully, and the stratagem by which he blinds the husband's jealousy cannot be described in decent language. Nevertheless the intrigue of the piece is animated and amusing; the sudden and unexpected turns in the situation leave us breathless, and the liveliness of the dialogue and repartee is elaborated in Wycherley's best manner. In *The Plain Dealer* is still more painfully apparent that bluntness of feeling, or, rather, that total insensibility to moral impressions, which is the prevailing tone of Restoration drama, and of Wycherley's plays in particular. Molière's Alceste, in *Le Misanthrope*, is a noble gentleman, whose very faults are a proof of his constant and irreproachable disposition. His generous heart, irritated past endurance by the smooth hypocrisy of social life, and bleeding from a thousand stabs inflicted by a cruel coquette, claims our sympathy even in its outbursts of outraged feeling. But Wycherley borrowed Alceste, and in his hands the virtuous and injured hero of Molière became, in Macaulay's phrase, "a ferocious sensualist, who believes himself to be as great a rascal as he thinks everybody else. And to make the whole complete, Wycherley does not seem to have been aware that he was not drawing the portrait of an eminently honest man. So depraved was his moral taste, that, while he firmly believed that he was producing a picture of virtue too exalted for the commerce of this world, he was really delineating the greatest rascal that is to be found, even in his own writings." Dryden's praise of Wycherley is sufficient proof of the moral short-sightedness of the time. "The author of *The Plain Dealer*, whom I am proud to call my friend, has obliged all honest and virtuous men by one of the most bold, most general, and most useful satires which has ever been presented on the English Theatre." Wycherley certainly obliged a man so virtuous and honest as Sheridan with several posthumous suggestions for an admirable comedy, but virtue and honesty have otherwise received little benefit from him. Hideous travesties like Mrs. Pinchwife, and brutalities like Manly, justified the vituperations of Jeremy Collier, and have injured Wycherley with all succeeding generations of readers.

Wycherley's comedies.

"The Country Wife" (1672–3).

"The Plain Dealer" (1674).

§ 5. The second star in this brilliant constellation of comic writers was SIR JOHN VANBRUGH, the son of a rich sugar-baker, Giles Vanbrugh, who came of a Dutch family, as the name indicates, and had settled in the parish of St. Nicholas Acons. John Vanbrugh was the second son of his marriage with a daughter of Sir Dudley Carleton; and, a year or two after his birth, in 1667, the family removed to Chester. The dramatist spent much of his youth in Paris, and, from 1690 to 1692, was imprisoned as a spy, first in Vincennes, and then in the Bastille. His fanciful allusion to this in after-life, combined with a certain difficulty in fixing dates, led to Isaac D'Israeli's conjecture that he was born in the Bastille; and this was seriously weighed by Leigh Hunt in his exhaustive essay of 1849. His career possessed the merit of variety. He was in the army for a short time, and obtained a commission as captain. His first comedy, *The Relapse, or Virtue in Danger*, was produced at Drury Lane in December, 1696, with Colley Cibber in the part of Lord Foppington. This was followed in January, 1697, by *Æsop*, which, although it followed the custom of the time in being an adaptation from the French of Edmond Boursault, was rather too grave for the frivolous and demoralised public. This was still at Drury Lane; but in May, 1697, Vanbrugh brought out his second great comedy, *The Provoked Wife*, at Lincoln's Inn Fields. His next work was a revision of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Pilgrim* for Drury Lane, which was acted for Dryden's benefit on its third night, March 27th, 1700. Then followed another adaptation, *The False Friend*, from two plays by Le Sage and Francisco de Rojas Zorrilla. In 1705 *The Confederacy* was played at the theatre which Vanbrugh had designed in the Haymarket, and in December of the same year came *The Mistake*, his version of Molière's *Le Dépit Amoureux*. He wrote two or three other comedies, of which the most interesting, historically speaking, is *Squire Trelooby* (1704), the result of collaboration with Congreve and Walsh in adapting Molière's *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*. His unfinished fragment, *A Journey to London*, was finished by Cibber and produced in 1728. But, from 1702, the year in which he was appointed comptroller of the royal works, he seems to have abandoned literature more and more for architecture. His theatre proved an acoustic failure, but he became the fashionable architect of the day. His taste was heavily and egregiously Palladian, but his architectural work, if too solid, and showing an occasional divergence into unmeaning dulness, is certainly excellent. Castle Howard, begun in 1701, and Blenheim, begun in 1705, are the best examples. He quarrelled over Blenheim with that malignant virago, the Duchess Sarah, who appropriated his designs and dismissed him; his account of the quarrel (1718) is as amusing as any scene in his comedies. Lord Carlisle, for whom he

The Orange dramatists: SIR JOHN VANBRUGH (1664–1726). *Life.*

Architectural career.

built Castle Howard, was kinder to him, and procured him the post of Clarenceux king-at-arms. He was knighted by George I in September, 1714, and was employed in numerous architectural posts—among others, in the works at Greenwich Hospital. In January, 1719, he was married at York to Miss Henrietta Yarburgh of Snaith, by whom he seems to have had three children. His son Charles was killed at Fontenoy in 1745. Sir John himself died in March, 1726, at his town house in Whitehall, and was buried in his family fault at St. Stephen's, Walbrook. On the evidence of his portrait, and of his contemporaries, he was one of the most lovable and honourable men of his time.

Death.

His comedies, although they suffer from the ordinary defects of the day, give him the same character. They are invariably lively and good-humoured. In dialogue he is less elaborate, less intellectual, and less highly polished than Wycherley, but his simplicity and dramatic brevity have infinite merit in themselves. He is, however, equally fertile in stratagem; his personages have a miraculous ingenuity in getting out of difficulties; and one great secret of the comic art he possesses in an almost equal degree with Molière—the secret depending upon skilful repetition, which is an infallible talisman for exciting comic emotions. His fops, his booby squires, his pert chambermaids and valets, his intriguing ladies, his romps, and his blacklegs, are all drawn from the life, and are delineated with the greatest vivacity. There is in all a good deal of exaggeration; but this is easily overlooked if we consider the amusement they afford us and the consistency with which their personality is maintained. Moreover, these types are practically extinct in modern society, and we feel, in looking at them, that same curiosity which we give to the quaint costumes and fantastic attitudes of a gallery of old portraits. Lord Foppington, in *The Relapse*, is an admirable caricature of the pompous and ignorant coxcomb of his day. He was actually invented (1696) by Cibber, in *Love's Last Shift*, a play to which *The Relapse* is professedly a sequel, but Vanbrugh gave him popularity, and general readers usually remember him from Sheridan's *Trip to Scarborough*, a recast of Vanbrugh's play. He finds his contrast in the dense, brutal, ignorant country squire, a sort of prototype of Fielding's Western; and in Hoyden we have the first specimen of a class of character which Vanbrugh drew with peculiar skill—the bouncing rebellious girl, full of animal spirits, and waiting only for an opportunity to break out of all rule. Corinna, in *The Confederacy*, is another variety of the same character, with this difference, that Hoyden has been brought up in the country, while Corinna, in spite of her inexperience, is already thoroughly corrupted, and is, as she says herself, "a devilish girl at bottom." In *The Provoked Wife*, the most striking character is Sir John

Characteristics of his comedies.

His use of contemporary types.

Brute, whose uproarious blackguardism was one of Garrick's best impersonations. *The Confederacy* is perhaps Vanbrugh's best comedy in point of plot, and the *dramatis personæ* are inimitably amusing. There are the two old usurers and their extravagant wives, whose weakness is played upon by Dick Amlet and his confederate sharper, Brass; there is the graceless Dick's equivocal mother, the *marchande de la toilette*, Mrs. Amlet; there is Corinna, and the maid Flippanta, whose part was taken by Mrs. Bracegirdle. We feel indeed that we have got into exceedingly bad company, where all the men are rascals and the women no better than they should be; but their life and conversation, "pleasant but wrong," are always animated and gay; and perhaps the very profligacy of their characters, by forbidding us to feel any serious sympathy with their fate, only leaves us more free to follow the surprising incidents of their career. The unfinished *Journey to London*, which Cibber worked up into *The Provoked Husband*, promised great excellence. The journey of the country squire, Sir Francis Headpiece (called Wronghead in Cibber's version), and his inimitable family; the description of their cavalcade, and the interview between the new "parliament-man" in search of a place and the minister, are in the very vein of Smollett. Cibber, in whose latter days morality was finding its way back to comedy, introduced a sentimental and sermonising element in the punishment and repentance of Lady Townley, and the contrast between her and her "sober" sister-in-law, Lady Grace; but this part of the intrigue is responsible for Sheridan's delightful scenes between Sir Peter and Lady Teazle in *The School for Scandal*. Vanbrugh is in no sense an edifying author, but his humour was of a rare order. His coarseness is far less refined —if we can speak of coarseness in this way—than that of Wycherley; it is more frank and superficial; and, for this very reason, the atmosphere of his comedies is far more healthy. Wycherley's satire is brutal, ill-tempered, and profoundly immoral; Vanbrugh writes easily, cheerfully, and without the least malice, and the outer coat of grossness which his plays wear is hardly even skin-deep. Without any great eminence of intellect, he remains one of our greatest English humorists, and has invented more comic situations than it would be possible to count.

"The Confederacy" (1705).

"The Journey to London."

Vanbrugh's humour.

§ 6. GEORGE FARQUHAR gives an Irish dramatist to the series. He was probably the son of a clergyman, and was born at Londonderry. He went to Trinity College, Dublin, but, at a very early period, left his books for the stage. However, while playing in Dryden's *Indian Emperor* at Dublin, he accidentally took his sword on the scene instead of a foil, and wounded another actor. On this, he gave up acting, and was for some time in the army, as

GEORGE FARQUHAR (1678–1707).

a captain in Lord Orrery's regiment. This experience supplied him with the materials for his lively and faithful portraits of gay rattling officers and for one of his most pleasant comedies. His first play was brought out in 1699, while he was in London, between the stage and the army. He left the army—so the tradition goes—in order to marry a girl who fell in love with his appearance, and, to gain her end, selfishly and falsely professed herself an heiress. This unfortunate step reduced him to poverty, and, of the four great comic writers of the age, he was the only one who positively had to write for his living. This fact accounts for the rapid succession of his plays. *Love and a Bottle* (1699), *The Constant Couple* (1700), *Sir Harry Wildair* (1701), *The Inconstant* (1702), *The Twin Rivals* (1702), *The Stage Coach* (1704), and *The Recruiting Officer* (1706), followed each other until his early death in 1707. He composed his last play, *The Beaux' Stratagem* (1707), upon his very deathbed. The life of this gentle and unhappy Irish gallant seems to take us back to the early days of English drama—to the riotous lives and sad deaths of Greene and Marlowe, not much more than a century before.

His comedies.

Farquhar's plays faithfully reflect his gay, loving, and vivacious character. Down to his early death they not only went on increasing in joyous animation, but showed a constantly growing skill and ingenuity in construction. His last works are incomparably his best. In all his pieces we are delighted with the overflow of high animal spirits, which are, as in nature, generally accompanied by a certain frankness and generosity. We readily pardon the peccadilloes of his heroes; their escapades are to be attributed less to innate depravity than to the heat of blood and effervescence of youth. If they engage in frequent deceptions and tricks, they are not the deep, deliberate, and inhuman rascals who preside over Wycherley's intrigues, nor are they merely amusing scoundrels like Vanbrugh's sharpers. Of the plays, *The Beaux' Stratagem* has the best construction; and the expedient of the two embarrassed gentlemen, who come down into the country disguised as a master and his servant, although not very probable, is extremely well managed, and furnishes a series of lively and laughable adventures. The contrast between Archer and Aimwell, and Vanbrugh's Dick Amlet and Brass, points to Farquhar's higher moral tone; and the numerous characters with whom they are brought in contact—Boniface the landlord, Cherry, Squire Sullen, and the inimitable Scrub, not to mention Gibbet the highwayman, and Father Foigard, the Irish-French Jesuit—are drawn with never-failing vivacity. There are passages and expressions of Farquhar—nay, sometimes whole scenes—stamped with a rich humour and oddity which engrave them on the memory. Boniface's laudation of his ale, and Squire Sullen's conversation with Scrub: "What day o' th' week is this? *Scrub*

"The Beaux' Stratagem" (1707).

—Sunday, an't please your worship. *Sul.*—Sunday! Bring me a dram!"—such traits are testimony to Farquhar's comic genius.

Farquhar's humour.

The scenes in *The Recruiting Officer*, in which Sergeant Kite inveighs the two clowns to enlist, and the character of Captain Plume—supposed to be Farquhar's portrait of himself—are also memorable. In the early plays, such as *The Constant Couple* and *The Inconstant*, the reader will not fail to find scenes worked up to the greatest brilliancy of comic effect, as, for example, the admirable interview in *Sir Harry Wildair* between the hero and Lady Lurewell, when the envious coquette endeavours to make him jealous of his wife, and he drives her almost to madness by dilating on his conjugal happiness. The gay geniality which is the predominant virtue of Farquhar's work more than compensates for his less elaborate command of sparkling repartee. He seems to write from his heart; and therefore, although his dramas do not reach after a very high standard of morality, they are free from the nauseating heartlessness generally prevalent in those days. "Farquhar," says Mr. Edmund Gosse, "succeeds in being always wholesome, even when he cannot persuade himself to be decent."

Freedom of his work from the prevalent heartlessness of comedy.

§ 7. But the most fortunate, and incomparably the best playwright of the day, whose reputation was then unrivalled both in comedy and tragedy, was WILLIAM CONGREVE. He came of a family whose estate lay in Staffordshire, but his birthplace was Bardsey, near Leeds. His father was employed later as head of the garrison at Youghal; and it was in Ireland that the future wit and dramatist received his education, first at the Kilkenny College and afterwards at Trinity College, Dublin. The scholarship which was the result of this training, and particularly his acquaintance with Latin literature, placed him far above the majority of contemporary triflers; and, when he came to London, nominally to study law, like Wycherley, in the Middle Temple, he naturally became a prominent member of fashionable and intellectual society. During his whole life he seems to have been among the first of social favourites. He was handsome; his conversation was attractive; and, in addition, his character was sufficiently cool and selfish to carry him triumphantly through everything. In short, he was the perfect type of what Thackeray, in his splendid but uncritical essay, described as the "fashionable literary swell." He longed to combine the double *rôle* of a man of elegance and a man of letters; but the two objects were not altogether compatible at a time when the literary hack was become a figure too typical of the profession. When Voltaire, whose admiration of Congreve's work was extraordinary, paid him a visit, he affected the character of a mere private gentleman; but his vanity was

WILLIAM CONGREVE (1670–1729). *Life.*

His success on the stage and in society.

reproved by Voltaire's acute and sensible reply, "If you had been a mere gentleman, I should not have come to see you." His literary career was singularly auspicious. It is contained within a very few years, for he had the good sense to leave the stage before his vein of humour had run out. His first two comedies, *The Old Bachelor* and *The Double Dealer*, appeared at Drury Lane at the beginning and end of 1693. *Love for Love* was acted in Betterton's theatre of Portugal Row, Lincoln's Inn Fields, in 1695. His famous and only tragedy, *The Mourning Bride*, appeared in 1697, and *The Way of the World* belongs to 1700. His early works were at once recognised as the most brilliant productions of the time. Dryden, who, in company with Southerne, had edited *The Old Bachelor* for the stage, hailed Congreve, in a noble congratulatory epistle on *The Double Dealer*, as the superior of Jonson and Fletcher in their chief excellences, and—

> "Worn with cares and age,
> And just abandoning th' ungrateful stage"

—bequeathed his succession to the young playwright. But, fortunately for himself, Congreve gained not only praise, but solid patronage as well. Successive and hostile ministers competed with each other in rewarding him with numerous and lucrative sinecures; and he was prudent enough, not only to succeed in frequenting, as an honoured guest, the society of his greatest contemporaries, but also to accumulate a large fortune. A disorder of the eyes, under which he long suffered, ultimately left him blind, and he was much troubled by gout; but these ailments never diminished the grace and gaiety of his conversation, and, till the end of his life, he remained the admired, popular, and ingenious Mr. Congreve, the *doyen* of letters. His literary fame, the legacy of Dryden, is rounded off by the fact that Pope, in 1720, passed over everybody else to dedicate his *Iliad* to him. Like most men of his time, Congreve had several love affairs, and, for a long time, was the acknowledged lover of the fascinating and generous Mrs. Bracegirdle, the best and most beautiful actress of the period; and it was for her that he wrote such parts as those of Angelica and Millamant. In his old age, however, he neglected her for the Duchess of Marlborough, the daughter and heiress of the great Duke; and his infatuation for her, not unmixed, perhaps, with some admiration for her title, was so great that he left the bulk of his estate, amounting to £10,000, not to Mrs. Bracegirdle, who would have appreciated the addition to her income, nor to his relatives, who were by no means wealthy, but to the duchess, in whose immense fortune the sum was but as a drop in the ocean. This is perhaps the most selfish and ostentatious act recorded of Congreve, but it unfortunately speaks volumes for his character. He died in 1729, and was honoured with a magnificent

Congreve's affaires de cœur.

His death.

and almost national funeral. His body lay in state in the Jerusalem Chamber, and was followed to his tomb in Westminster Abbey by all the most illustrious members of English society.

§ 8. Congreve's early novel, *Incognita*, which he published under the pseudonym of Cleophil, is now almost forgotten; and the real inauguration of his glory was the representation of his first comedy, *The Old Bachelor*. He was only twenty-three at the time, and had written it, nearly four years before, in a quiet Berkshire garden; but, for all that, it was the work of a finished man of the world, and was received as such by the applauding public and critics. The intrigue is, indeed, improbable and badly constructed; the characters are conventional dummies, each labelled, in the manner of the time, with a name descriptive of his particular "humour"; but it possesses the great merit of the dramatists of the Restoration and Revolution in an inordinate degree—perfection of style. Compared with Congreve's early work, Wycherley's is nowhere. Congreve's scenes are one incessant flash and sparkle of the finest repartee; one dazzling rapier-thrust of wit and satiric pleasantry succeeds another without interruption; and the wit, as is always the case in the highest examples, is allied to shrewd sense and acute observation of mankind. Indeed, in Congreve's style of dialogue, the main defect is a plethora of ingenious allusion; he falls into the error, which is common to all writers of fine and subtle fiction, of making his fools and coxcombs as brilliant as his professed wits. But his unique quality is the skill with which he divests this brilliant intellectual sword-play of every shade of formality and constraint. His conversations, although of course far more elaborate and sustained than any conversation imaginable, have the merit of seeming natural, and their consummate ease and idiomatic vivacity give his style a peculiar and unattainable flavour. It would be hard to write as well as Wycherley; to write as well as Congreve in this particular line would be impossible. It is, of course, this surpassing skill in dialogue that redeems the conventional flatness of the figures which parade his stage. In his Belinda we have the English *précieuse*, the counterpart of Molière's Madelon and Cathos, but far more disagreeable. Captain Bluffe, again, his bullying braggadocio, is worthy of a place beside Pyrgopolinices, Parolles, Bessus, and Bobadil; and his mention of Hannibal is deliciously comic: "Hannibal was a very pretty fellow in those days, it must be granted; but, alas, sir, were he alive now, he would be nothing, nothing in the earth." We can hardly wonder at the extravagance of contemporary praise, in the presence of this splendid young writer, with his perfect style and mastery of glittering phrase. Our own age would scarcely accept him with such unqualified demonstration, for

His comedies.

"The Old Bachelor" (1693).

Congreve's skill in dialogue.

the tastes and manners which he represents are happily obsolete. But, while we read Wycherley to-day with an interest that is more than three parts archæological, Congreve remains one of the acknowledged and perennial sources of English wit and humour.

The Double Dealer, although the subject of Dryden's eulogy, had not the success of *The Old Bachelor*. This is really not surprising, for the plot, or the tangled intrigue which passes for a plot, is not only gloomy and tragic, but positively abhorrent. Lady Touchwood, as it were, is one of Ford's tragic heroines, divested of any human feeling, and set to play her unnatural part in the folly and vanity of comedy. Her introduction shows, on the part of Congreve, a distinct blindness to the fitness of things, and argues a morbid imagination. Her lover, Maskwell, who is false to everyone in turn, and pursues the threads of a vigorous but very complex collection of stratagems, is altogether too puzzling a personage; had he been content to do one thing at a time instead of spinning his tangled web at so prodigious a rate, he might be a sinister villain. However, there is no doubt that in this intricate comedy a few of the characters emerge from the painted surface, and ask for human sympathy. The hero, Mellefont, is really, comparatively speaking, a virtuous and hardly-treated person, and not one of those fickle libertines, one of whose representatives sings, in *The Old Bachelor*, "Nothing's new besides their faces, every woman is the same." Nevertheless, his friend Careless makes up for his shortcomings in this direction; and we cannot help feeling that, were Mellefont in different and more fortunate circumstances, he would be just such a triumphant rake as all the others. Congreve's heroes are quite as heartless, if not as indelicate, as Wycherley's. *"The Double Dealer"* (1693).

It is usual to consider *Love for Love* as Congreve's masterpiece, and, as a stage-play, and from the point of view of plot, this it undoubtedly is. There is, at any rate, no more outwardly perfect comedy in English. The intrigue has far more than the ordinary pretensions to the dignity of a plot, and the characters, without aspiring to any great reality, yet exhibit infinite variety and relieve each other with unrelaxing spirit. Valentine, with his pretended madness and the unexpected turns in his passion for Angelica, Sir Sampson Legend, the doting old astrologer Foresight, Mrs. Frail, Miss Prue (a character of the type of Vanbrugh's Corinna or Hoyden), and, above all, the inimitable Ben—the first attempt to portray the rough, unsophisticated sailor on the stage—the whole *dramatis personæ*, down to the most insignificant, are a crowd of picturesque and well-contrasted oddities. The scene in which Sir Sampson endeavours to persuade his son to renounce his inheritance, the arrival of Ben from sea, and his conversation with Miss Prue, are hardly *"Love for Love"* (1695).

to be surpassed in the comedy of any nation. Of course, Congreve paid his tribute of adaptation to Molière; but it may be said that in his scene between Valentine and Trapland the usurer, freely copied from Don Juan's celebrated interview with M. Dimanche, he paid a high compliment to his great original. Everyone has had something to say of Valentine's ravings: as an isolated passage, this is the highest point which Congreve's wit ever reached, and its effect upon the reader is simply dazzling. Sheridan, who drew upon the post-Restoration comic writers, as they had drawn upon Molière, converted Sir Sampson Legend, Valentine's noisy, confident father, into Sir Anthony Absolute.

Congreve's one tragedy, which we leave till later, came between *Love for Love* and *The Way of the World*, his fare-well to the stage. A certain prejudice exists against *The Way of the World*, owing to the fact that it was badly received on the stage. It must not be forgotten that between the two comedies had been published Jeremy Collier's famous and heroic attack on the licence of the stage. (See Notes to this chapter.) If this left its objects impenitent, it awoke the general conscience and dealt the death-blow to sheer animalism in play-writing. *The Way of the World* was therefore a year too late; it was not profoundly licentious, but it was tolerantly immoral, and the public would have none of it. In addition to this, however, it is far the most intellectual of Congreve's plays—if to say so is not hyperbolical. Nowhere did he depend less on intrigue and more on style, and consequently it lends itself less to the stage than any of his pieces. Here, more than ever, the characters are mere mouthpieces for remarks of a bewildering ingenuity; the quasi-reality of Ben and Sir Sampson is quite gone again. There are the usual array of types—the pair of libertines, the ladies whose affections they attempt to monopolise, the marplot, the rude country squire, the boor who affects the manners of a blood, and the conventional waiting-women. Between all these is carried on an intrigue which surpasses even that in *The Double Dealer*, and must have tormented the comprehension even of its architect. But, oddly enough, out of this lifeless crowd and its shower of lively badinage steps the one living figure which Congreve added to the gallery of English fiction. Lady Wishfort's hysterics are fine, and the meeting of the townified Witwoud and his brother, the country baronet, is finer; but Mrs. Millamant, the coquette, beauty, and splendid lady of fashion, is finest of all. Her fastidiousness, the freedom of her conversation, her resistance to her suitor, and her final surrender, with all those outward excellences of face and form of which her presence assures us, go to make a portrait of a witty, proud, and yet tender-hearted lady whom one may compare, if not with Shakespeare's Beatrice, at least with such

"The Way of the World" (1700). Its failure.

Congreve's masterpiece.

Millamant.

lively and amiable figures as Rosalura and Lillia Bianca in Fletcher's *Wild-Goose Chase*. "The force of nature could no farther go," and Congreve, probably a little discontented, like Dryden, with the "ungrateful stage," retired. In his old age he produced, after the fashion of the day, a volume of fugitive and miscellaneous trifles, which are not much above the ordinary level of that style of composition.

§ 9. Congreve forms the link between the comedy and the tragedy of the age. His *Mourning Bride* met with the enthusiasm already accorded to his comedies, and was praised later on, when the comedies had fallen into a certain discredit. Dr. Johnson went into raptures over the frigid description of the temple with its vaulted and echoing avenues; and everybody knows the opening phrase, "Music has charms to soothe a savage breast." There is indeed a strange difference between its pompous, solemn strain and the dishevelled licence of the comedies. *The Mourning Bride* is fit reading for young ladies and children; its virtues are all idealised with an extravagant neglect of proportion; its vicious persons are possessed with comparatively harmless demons, although their passions run as high as the stiff manner of tirade allows. There is a vast amount of distress in the tragedy, which succeeds in astonishing without touching the reader. The fact is that the rhetorical form of tragedy, which had reached so high an excellence in Corneille and had been so warmly advocated by Dryden, is fatal to human passion and sympathy, and no quantity of suffering on the stage can compensate for a lack of quality. The principal merit of the piece remains in the power and melody of many of the passages, and in the talent of its author for artificial description.

"The Mourning Bride" (1697).

§ 10. We have spoken in the last chapter of Dryden's tragedies. His most distinguished contemporary in this branch of writing was the unfortunate THOMAS OTWAY. He was the son of the Reverend Humphrey Otway, rector of Woolbeding in Sussex, and was born at Trotton, near Midhurst. His early intention was to take Holy Orders, and he was educated at Winchester and as a commoner at Christ Church, Oxford. He appears, however, to have been left without means at his father's death, and, leaving Oxford without a degree, went to London, where he attempted the profession of an actor. His one and only appearance was a failure; it took place in the Duke of York's Theatre in Dorset Garden, and the play was Mrs. Behn's *Forced Marriage*. His life in London was irregular and extravagant; his natural charm of manner and good-humour seems to have brought him, at Oxford, into company whose ways were above his means. In spite of his failure as an actor, the stage remained his great attraction, and, in 1675, his first play, *Alcibiades*, was produced at Dorset Garden by Betterton's

THOMAS OTWAY (1652-1685).

company. About this time, Rochester, that fickle and malignant patron of letters, took Otway under his wing, and one result of this connection was that *Don Carlos* (1676) obtained a great success. In 1677 Otway took to adaptation, and produced *Titus and Berenice*, from Racine, and *The Cheats of Scapin*, from Molière. But, among the Duke of York's players was the lovely Mrs. Barry, who held the stage until the beginning of the next century, and acted in Vanbrugh's and Congreve's comedies. The young dramatist fell madly in love with her, which offended Rochester, her acknowledged lover, and gave him a good excuse for dropping his *protégé*, of whom he cannot have been seriously jealous. Otway tried to break the attraction by escaping from it. His friend, Lord Plymouth, a son of Charles II, obtained for him, in 1678, a commission as ensign in a foot regiment which was sent out to aid Monmouth in the relief of Mons. The campaign was a failure, the pay-money of the troops was misappropriated, and Otway returned to Dorset Garden and Mrs. Barry. Rochester's death in 1680 may have been a slight relief to his passion; at any rate, his true genius became manifest about this time. *Caius Marius* (1680) was, strange as it may seem, an adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*, and, which is still stranger, it became for many years the accredited representative of Shakespeare's tragedy on the English stage. Earlier in the same year *The Orphan* was acted and published with a dedication to Mary of Modena. The part of Monimia was written for Mrs. Barry, and the page-boy, Cordelio, was played by Mrs. Bracegirdle, who was herself to have parts of another kind written for her, but was then only six years old. *The Soldier's Fortune*, a comedy, appeared in 1681, and, in 1682, came his masterpiece, *Venice Preserved*, in which Mrs. Barry received the part of Belvidera. But the actress treated her lover contemptuously; and he, at his wits' end for money, and heavily in debt, took to drinking. His last play, *The Atheist*, was a comedy in continuation of *The Soldier's Fortune*, and was acted at Dorset Garden in 1684. The closing days of his life were miserable. The Duchess of Portsmouth, to whom he inscribed *Venice Preserved*, was, if we may trust the dedication, very generous to him. However, he was unable to fight against his troubles, and spent his time between spunging-houses and obscure hiding-places. The story of his death is generally related thus. One day he went into a coffee-house, in a starving condition, and begged a shilling of a gentleman, who, distressed at his wretched state, gave him a guinea. Otway rushed off to a baker's shop, bought a roll, and was choked while ravenously swallowing the first mouthful. He was buried in St. Clement Danes. There are other versions of the tale, but it is incontestable that his end was the result of want of food. He was thirty-four years, one

His love affair with Mrs. Barry.

His service in the army.

Otway as a playwright.

His death.

month, and eleven days of age. There can be no doubt that his misfortunes were due to his extravagance, but his ardent affection for Mrs. Barry played a considerable part in them, and he deserves the utmost pity.

Character of his tragedy: its pathos.

His great merit as a dramatist is his command of pathos, and he possesses, in a greater degree than any other post-Restoration writer, the power of uniting pathetic emotion with the expression of the darker and more ferocious passions. He is, too, a master of that aggravated distress which, as distinguished from the heroic agony of Shakespeare's tragic plays, is the great sign of difference between the golden and silver age of English tragedy. It is to Otway's glory that, belated as he was, he belongs to that silver age and not to the age of brass and of *The Mourning Bride*; his two great plays, in spite of their declamatory stiffness, bear comparison with the work of Beaumont and Fletcher and Ford. Of course he incessantly reminds us of Dryden. *Don Carlos* is a rhymed tragedy so much after Dryden's own heart that, at the time, it provoked his envy. In *Venice Preserved*, the declamatory scenes, the quarrels and reconciliation of Pierre and Jaffier, the tragic death of the two friends, and the despair of Belvidera, are distinctly in Dryden's manner. But in pathos Otway is Dryden's superior; and his true instinct of dramatic fitness led him to do a thing which Dryden would have scorned to do with his high classical idea of tragedy, and to introduce comic scenes as a relieving element in the deep misery of his principal characters. This, again, brings him near to Fletcher and Ford. He had a sense of humour, and these scenes, although they are disgusting enough, are yet powerful and natural, and are far better than Ford's nauseous and dull interludes. As a writer of comedies, his name is better forgotten with his earliest original comedy, *Friendship in Fashion* (1678). *The Orphan* is a memorable and excellent tragedy. But his glory is *Venice Preserved, or a Plot Discovered*, which doubtless owed its popularity to its oblique reference to the contemporary scare of the Popish Plot. He did not attempt to preserve historical accuracy, but he succeeded in producing a very exciting and animated plot, which acts as a background to the fine contrasts between the weak and uxorious Jaffier and his determined fellow-conspirator, Pierre, and between the Senator Priuli's inhuman harshness and cruelty and Renault's ruffianly thirst for blood and plunder. All this is, in its way, unique; but Otway's genius had its limitations, and the ravings of Belvidera, so utterly different from Lear's or Ophelia's madness, with their lurid intervals of consciousness, are of themselves enough to shut him out of the first order of English dramatists.

"Venice Preserved" (1682).

§ 11. The name of Otway recalls the parallel career of NATHANIEL LEE, four years his junior, his contemporary as an author, and his rival in misery. Lee's father probably

was the Reverend Richard Lee, rector of Hatfield and other places in Hertfordshire. The date of his birth is uncertain, but he was educated at Westminster and Trinity College, Cambridge. Like Otway, he left his University to become an actor, and, like Otway, he failed. With *Nero* (1675) he began to write for Drury Lane, and this was followed, in 1676, by *Gloriana* and *Sophonisba*, on the heels of which came his two most famous plays, *The Rival Queens, or the Death of Alexander the Great* (1677), and *Mithridates, King of Pontus* (1678). Dryden helped to nurse *Mithridates* into fame with an epilogue, and, in 1679, when only twenty-four years old, Lee had the honour of furnishing the great poet with three acts of his *Œdipus*. Next came *Cæsar Borgia*—with a prologue by Dryden—and *Theodosius* (1680). *Lucius Junius Brutus*, with a strong element of pathos, followed in 1681; and in 1682 he again assisted Dryden with two-thirds of *The Duke of Guise*, which was intended as a gentle hint to opponents of the Duke of York's succession. Meanwhile, at the end of 1681, his only comedy, *The Princess of Cleve*, had appeared, with a prologue and epilogue by Dryden, at Dorset Garden. In 1684 *Constantine the Great* was acted at Drury Lane. Lee had been emulating and outdoing the "lunes of Tamburlaine" with increasing violence; his own sanity had been threatened, and now it gave way, and he was shut up in Bedlam. He came out again in 1689, but his health was of short duration; he produced one more tragedy, *The Massacre of Paris* (1690), and then went mad again. Two years later he died—according to the received account, most wretchedly. He was buried in St. Clement Danes. His work was certainly very prolific, and he produced two remarkable plays, *The Rival Queens* and *Mithridates*, in the first of which the heroic extravagance of his Alexander is relieved by the attachment and amorous complications of the two strongly-opposed characters of Roxana and Statira. Hyperbole of imagery and expression is Lee's chief characteristic, as it is his fault. If Otway is a Shakespearean dramatist born out of due time, Lee belongs even more to the Elizabethan period. He does not, however, challenge comparison with its chief authors; he hangs at the hem of their garments. If he resembles anyone in his style, it is Marlowe—and the title of his last drama seems to point to imitation. His choice of subject in *Cæsar Borgia*, too, takes us back to those earlier days.

NATHANIEL LEE (1653?–1692).

His connection with Dryden.

His madness and death.

Lee's ranting style.

§ 12. "A virgin poet was served up to-day
Who till this hour ne'er cackled for a play,"

wrote Dryden in his epilogue to *The Loyal Brother, or the Persian Prince* (1682). This was the *début* of the tragic poet

THOMAS SOUTHERNE. He was a few years younger than Lee, and his best work belongs to the period succeeding the deaths of both Lee and Otway. He was a native of Dublin, but came to London and entered the Middle Temple, abandoned the law for the army, and the army for the theatre. He served as a captain in one of the corps employed to suppress Monmouth's rebellion, and in all probability was present at the battle of Sedgemoor. This was, however, a mere interlude in his life. He wrote a great deal, and lived far into the eighteenth century upon the fortune which he had acquired by his plays, dying at the age of eighty-six. His work consists of ten plays, the best of which are the tragedies of *The Fatal Marriage* (1694) and *Oroonoko* (1696). *Oroonoko*, which touches the high-water mark of distress, was founded on a story furnished to Southerne by Mrs. Aphra Behn, and, being the story of an African prince, torn by the slave-trade from his country and home, is remarkable as the first instance of any literary attempt to disclose the horrors of the traffic of which the hero is a victim. Southerne was not, however, a very lively dramatist ; and if, as appears to be the case, he imitated Otway, he borrowed his sentimentality without profiting by his vigour. His tragedies form the intermediate link between the work of Otway and Lee, in which we see the last glow of the ashes of Elizabethan drama, and the French frigidity of Congreve and Rowe. *Oroonoko* appeared in 1696, Congreve's *Mourning Bride* in 1697. Southerne's plays include a few dull and indecent comedies, to one of which, *The Disappointment, or the Mother in Fashion* (1684), Dryden wrote, and Betterton spoke, the prologue.

THOMAS SOUTHERNE (1660–1746).

§ 13. The popularity of *The Mourning Bride* was as fatal to English tragedy as Collier's contemporary onslaught was to comedy. It gave, as it were, a charter to mere formalism and artificial passion, and we can see its ultimate results in plays like Addison's *Cato*, and Thomson's *Sophonisba*. NICHOLAS ROWE still preserves a reputation where most of the nonentities of this artificial school are forgotten, partly as the first editor (1709) of Shakespeare who combined a profound and loyal admiration of the great dramatist's work with true critical and philological principles. His own dramas, however, if founded upon a true enthusiasm for the great masters of tragedy, are obtuse, affected, and lifeless. Like so many other dramatists, he was a Templar, and employed his leisure in writing for the stage. The brilliant literary society of his day received him cordially, and he became a member of that band of writers and critics which surrounded Pope, Swift, Prior, and Arbuthnot. To a certain coldness and selfishness of character he added the advantage of an independent fortune, and his plays and translations procured him several lucrative places in the patronage of

NICHOLAS ROWE (1674–1718).

Government. He was surveyor of the customs, clerk of the council in the service of the Prince of Wales, clerk of the presentations, and, during the last three years of his life, Poet Laureate (1715–1718). Of his plays, the best known are *Jane Shore* (1714) and *Lady Jane Grey* (1715), in which he aped something of the quaintness of the older authors, and *The Fair Penitent* (1703), an adaptation from Massinger's *Fatal Dowry*, in which artificial pathos and tenderness are at their last and most convulsive gasp. The "gallant, gay Lothario" of this play has, oddly enough, become as classical as Congreve's "Music has charms," and, even in our own day, is used interchangeably with Don Juan as a proverbial synonym for the faithless lover; and from this portrait Richardson obtained the outline which he filled up so successfully in Lovelace.

"The Fair Penitent" (1703).

§ 14. Two or three minor dramatists should not be forgotten. The name of THOMAS SHADWELL is usually remembered with all the obloquy which Dryden so spitefully cast upon it. The son of a royalist country squire, John Shadwell of Broomhill in Norfolk, he went for a short time to Caius College, Cambridge, travelled abroad, and returned to write plays, assuming, as he tells us in the preface to his first comedy, *The Sullen Lovers* (1668), the manner of Ben Jonson. His best known comedy is *Epsom Wells* (1672), which is far above the average of minor pieces of the time. Two years later he joined in Dryden's attack upon Elkanah Settle. But between 1676 and 1682 he became a Whig, and parted company with his illustrious contemporary. For the time being this was to his private advantage, for his politics enabled him to snatch the Poet-Laureateship from Dryden at the Revolution. But, where posterity was concerned, he made a great mistake, and forfeited whatever reputation he might have had, to stand for ever in a fatal bracket with the inferior Settle. His want of wit did not prevent him from being amusing, but there was very little truth in his suspicion that Jonson's humorous mantle had fallen upon him.

THOMAS SHADWELL (1642?–1692).

Another comic writer whose life covered almost exactly the same period was the somewhat notorious MRS. APHRA BEHN. Her maiden name was Johnson, and her early years were spent in Surinam. Her adventurous youth and her subsequent career as a political spy in Holland might furnish an interesting, if scandalous, memoir. She brought out her first play, *The Forced Marriage*, in 1671, and, from that time onwards, wrote hard for her living. Comedies, tragedies, and novels—all of a second-rate type—succeeded each other with immense rapidity. The two parts of *The Rover* (1677 and 1681) are usually reckoned her best comedies, and among Dryden's prologues we find one prefixed to *The Widow Ranter* (1690). She wrote under the pseudonym of Astræa,

APHRA BEHN (1640–1689).

and Pope's line, "The stage how loosely doth Astræa tread!" hints that, in days when licentious writing was tolerated, the works of this singular lady were remarkable for their freedom from the last rags of convention.

JOHN CROWNE or CROWN was similarly of colonial origin, being the son of a gentleman who had emigrated to Nova Scotia, and may or may not have been an Independent preacher, as report styles him. He was extremely prolific, and sometimes produced good work, but was abnormally dull and sententious. His first play was *Juliana* (1671); his most famous tragedy was *Thyestes* (1681), which has survived oblivion, thanks to the grim horror of its subject; his best known comedy is the excellent *Sir Courtly Nice* (1685), which was the first play acted before James II as King; and he ended his career with *Caligula* (1698). JOHN CROWNE (d. 1703?).

GEORGE LILLO was born just as the career of these writers was closing. This remarkable and singular person was a jeweller in Moorgate, and, being a prudent and industrious tradesman, made money by his wares, and wrote plays for his amusement. These dramatic works may be said to form the link between that kind of tragedy inaugurated by writers like the unknown author of *The Yorkshire Tragedy* and by Thomas Heywood, in his *Woman Killed by Kindness*, and the modern melodrama of crime and suffering innocence. *George Barnwell* (1731), *The Fatal Curiosity* (1736), and the unfinished *Arden of Feversham* (acted 1759), which must not be confounded with the Elizabethan play it professes to revise, were founded upon remarkable examples of middle-class tragedy and crime, and are typical instances of the *tragédie bourgeoise*. They need, however, so far as the reader is concerned, the lurid background of a suburban theatre, and are not, strictly speaking, as interesting as they are bloody. Lillo must, nevertheless, receive credit for a certain prosaic realism; and, had Defoe turned his attention to the ungodly stage and dramatised so edifying a tale as *Moll Flanders*, he might have come out of the experiment with a similar result. GEORGE LILLO (1693–1739).

§ 15. The example of Dryden shows the close connection between the drama and the poetry of the late Stewart and the Orange periods. Dryden's name stands by itself; his vigour and wealth of expression find no reflection in the correct suavity of his contemporaries. Waller and Cowley mark the stage of transition from Elizabethan passion to the frigid heroic couplet of the late seventeenth century, which, apart from the splendid exception of Dryden and the distinguished genius of Pope, is the characteristic of the mediocrity of the period. The fact is that, at this time, if people wrote for their living, they wrote drama, comedy or tragedy, and *Post-Restoration poetry.* *The noble poets.*

left the less lucrative business of verse, otherwise than merely complimentary, to elegant dabblers, men of rank and fashion, who could afford to devote an occasional hour to a neat satire or a graceful lyric. Consequently, the aim of the poets of the day was to write correctly and follow the mode. And as, with the Restoration public, a title and a reputation with the ladies covered a multitude of sins, the efforts of these dilettanti were received with extravagant praise. WENTWORTH DILLON, EARL OF ROSCOMMON, was a nephew of the famous Strafford, and had spent much of his life in France. He was a serious and learned person, and his poetry, which was much praised, principally consists of two didactic works, an original *Essay on Translated Verse* (1684), written in the rhymed couplet, and a translation of Horace's *Ars Poetica* (1680), in which he adopted blank verse, thereby creating a distinction between himself and contemporary poets. The first collected edition of his poems appeared in 1701. JOHN WILMOT, EARL OF ROCHESTER, the most execrable debauchee of Charles II's Court, produced a number of songs and fugitive lyrics, which, although their spirit is strained and artificial, bear considerable witness to the natural talents he had wasted. SIR CHARLES SEDLEY, again, was another of these literary *beaux*, who was the last survivor of these aristocratic amateurs. His first comedy, *The Mulberry Garden* (1668), is not devoid of gaiety and wit, and contains several songs of merit. Many other lyrics prove that Sedley possessed the grace, ease, and ingenuity which are the principal requisites of this kind of writing. His second comedy, *Bellamira*, was produced in 1687, and he wrote three other plays.

LORD ROSCOMMON (1633?–1685).

LORD ROCHESTER (1647–1680).

SIR CHARLES SEDLEY (1639?–1701).

JOHN SHEFFIELD, EARL OF MULGRAVE, and afterwards DUKE OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, whose *Essay on Satire* (1679) and *Essay on Poetry* (1682) were popularly ascribed to Dryden, so that the report procured him, after the publication of the first of them, a beating from Rochester's hired bullies, must be distinguished from GEORGE VILLIERS, DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM, the son of James I's "Steenie," and the author of the greater part of that very witty burlesque, *The Rehearsal* (1671). Another of the same class was CHARLES SACKVILLE, EARL OF DORSET, who wrote the charming, playful song, "To all you ladies now at land." He is said to have composed it at sea, on the eve of the engagement (1665) with Opdam's Dutch fleet, addressing it, like a courtly gentleman, to the ladies at Whitehall.

THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE (1649–1721).

THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM (1627–1688).

LORD DORSET (1638–1706).

§ 16. Outside the higher classes of society, the only important poets of the end of the seventeenth century were Philips and Pomfret. They, however, belong rather to the age of Pope than the age of Dryden. JOHN PHILIPS

Other poets.

was, in his later years, a serious poet, and wrote a heroic poem called *Blenheim* (1705), and a Georgic which he named *Cyder* (1708); but he is now known to the general reader by his *Splendid Shilling*, in which he parodied the solemn cadences of *Paradise Lost*. Like all good and humorous parodies, its virtue lay in the author's appreciation of the poem of which he made fun, and its place is among the best productions of the kind. It was pirated in 1701; Philips' own first edition appeared in 1705. JOHN PHILIPS (1676–1709).

JOHN POMFRET was a Bedfordshire clergyman, and in 1700 brought out *The Choice*, describing his ideal life of rural and literary retirement, without any great originality, but with a captivating natural simplicity and a fluent, unadorned style. *Hoc erat in votis*, but his prayer was not to be fulfilled. The Bishop of London, taking exception to some expression in his poem, refused to sanction his preferment to the pleasant living of his desire, and Pomfret, thrown into depression, caught smallpox and died of it. *The Choice* has survived, however, and may still be read with pleasure. JOHN POMFRET (1667–1702).

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

A.—OTHER DRAMATISTS.

COLLEY CIBBER (1671–1757), the famous actor-manager, whose name occupies so important a place in the stage-history of the Orange and Hanoverian periods, was a prolific writer of comedies. His work is amusing, but we see the comedy of manners in its decline through all his witty farces, and he is not to be compared for a moment with the great masters of stage dialogue. In his early life he enjoyed Congreve's friendship and patronage, and we have already seen that he had an interesting literary connection with Vanbrugh. From 1730 to 1757 he was Poet Laureate; and, in 1743, Pope chose, with an unreasonable and silly access of spite, to substitute him as hero of *The Dunciad* instead of Theobald. A careful study of the Hanoverian drama brings us into close contact with Cibber's amiable personality. He was the author of about thirty plays, good, bad, and indifferent, between 1696 and 1745.

ELKANAH SETTLE (1648–1724) has already been mentioned in connection with Dryden, who chose to make him his unworthy butt. He had the misfortune to be chosen as a foil to Dryden by the poet's enemies, and suffered in consequence. He published several plays, but the piece by which he will be best remembered is *The Empress of Morocco* (published 1671), a tragedy as remarkable for its rant and bombast as for the fact that it was the first illustrated play in English. The engravings did not appear till the second edition (1673).

B.—THE COLLIER CONTROVERSY.

The change in the morality of the stage which took place at the beginning of the eighteenth century is to be attributed to the nonjuring clergyman, JEREMY COLLIER (1650–1726). The flagrant indecency of Wycherley's plays settled down, in Congreve and Vanbrugh, into a hard, brilliant cynicism which threatened to become, in less able hands, the lasting reproach of English comedy. In 1698, Collier, who, as a churchman

and nonjuror, had suffered during the Revolution, unsparingly attacked this abuse in his *Short View of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage.* Collier was a scholar and a critic, not a mere fanatic or ignorant vituperator. He knew what he was talking about, and his book produced a great effect and a general consternation among the dramatists. With an array of remarkable learning, he brought forward all the weapons of satire and merciless criticism; his fire, wit, and energy cut like a knife into the ulcer of theatrical immorality, and left the dramatists without a word to say. Dryden, who, against his better judgment, had been responsible for half the license of Restoration comedy, remained silent out of very shame; Congreve, who chose to reply, would have done well to have kept silence; Vanbrugh, who was guilty of more obvious coarseness, chose to defend *The Relapse* and *The Provoked Wife* from the charge, and was a little more successful in maintaining his paradox. Special pleading, however, can only injure the worst causes. Collier answered his opponents in his *Defence of the Short View*, and remained triumphant. It is a curious fact that, in those days, the opinions of an ascetic, whose ecclesiastical position was supposed to approximate to Romanism, should have touched the conscience of a nation which, amid its frivolous amusements, was never tired of maintaining the principle of a Protestant succession; at any rate, Collier effected a change which none of the latitudinarian clergy of the day could have brought about, even if they had cared. The stage was not, of course, purified according to our modern ideas; but the public refused to accept its cynicism and disregard of morality any longer. Congreve's most brilliant drama, *The Way of the World* (1700), failed, as we have said, in consequence of Collier's attack. Subsequent comedies — Cibber's, Steele's, and, in a later age, Sheridan's — contain, without doubt, much that, to our modern taste, is not very agreeable; but they allow for virtue, religion, and morality, and their theme is no longer the triumph of the rake and the glorification of the wanton.

CHAPTER XIV.

PROSE WRITERS OF THE REVOLUTION.

§ 1. JOHN LOCKE: his life. § 2. His style and works. The *Letters on Toleration, Treatise on Civil Government.* § 3. *Essay concerning Human Understanding.* § 4. His minor essays. § 5. Theologians and divines. ISAAC BARROW: his life and attainments. His sermons. § 6. JOHN PEARSON. § 7. TILLOTSON. § 8. SOUTH. § 9. STILLINGFLEET; THOMAS SPRAT; THOMAS KEN; WILLIAM SHERLOCK. § 10. Progress of physical science towards the end of the seventeenth century. Origin of the Royal Society. Dr. JOHN WILKINS. § 11. Scientific writers. § 12. SIR ISAAC NEWTON. § 13. RAY; BOYLE. § 14. THOMAS BURNET; BISHOP BURNET.

§ 1. AT the Revolution of 1688, side by side with the establishment of constitutional freedom in the state, appeared remarkable manifestations of practical progress in science and philosophy. It was this period that produced Newton in physical, and Locke in intellectual science. JOHN LOCKE was the son of an attorney at Pensford in Somerset. He was born at Wrington in the same county, and was educated at Westminster School. In 1652 he entered Christ Church, Oxford, where he obtained a senior studentship and lectureships in Greek and moral philosophy. However, he managed to get exemption from taking Orders as his studentship prescribed, and devoted himself to the study of physics and especially of medicine, intending to become a doctor. But his constitution was naturally weak, and he suffered from a tendency to asthma, which in after life compelled him to retire from his public employments. It is certain that his intellectual experience of Oxford must have given him a distaste and contempt for the scholastic method of philosophy which was still prevalent in the University, and must have excited in him a strong hostility to that stationary or, rather, retrograde spirit which sheltered itself under the venerable and much-abused name of Aristotle. During his thirteen years of residence at Christ Church he cultivated a strong taste for metaphysical subjects, and there can be no question that he saw, early in life, the advantage of the experimental or inductive theory of which Bacon was the apostle, and the necessity of its application. In 1665 he went on a diplomatic mission to the Elector of Brandenburg, as secre-

JOHN LOCKE (1632–1704). *Life.*

His life at Oxford.

tary to Sir Walter Vane, and, on his return to Oxford in the following year, refused a flattering offer of a post in Lord Sandwich's embassy to Spain. In July, 1666, his medical skill made him acquainted with Lord Ashley, afterwards Earl of Shaftesbury, who became so celebrated for his political talent and for his unprincipled and factious conduct as Chancellor and as head of the Parliamentary opposition. Shaftesbury's friendship was fortunate for Locke. He attached the young scholar to his household, and entrusted him with the education, first of his son, and afterwards of his grandson, the subsequent author of the *Characteristics*. In his house Locke was brought into constant and intimate contact with the most distinguished politicians and literary men of the day—Halifax the Trimmer, the Duke of Buckinghamshire, and many others. As a political disciple of his patron, he had a certain amount of lively excitement. When Shaftesbury became Chancellor in 1672, Locke was nominated secretary of presentations. Shaftesbury, however, fell next year, but Locke was almost at once reappointed secretary to the council of trade, the reason for this, doubtless, lying in the fact that, in 1669, he had taken a principal interest, the extent of which we cannot exactly tell, in the scheme for colonising Carolina. In 1675, when the council of trade was dissolved, he visited France for his health, and, in his journal and letters, gave an accurate but uncomplimentary account of French society, written in a style which, for a very correct and even prosy author, is almost amusing. He returned to England in 1679, and, during Shaftesbury's second ministry, acted as his confidential adviser and agent. This was the historical period of the Exclusion Bill. Shaftesbury, as is well known, was at the head of a furious agitation, urging a measure for depriving the Duke of York of his right of succession, on the ground that his sympathies with the Roman faith were detrimental to the constitution. A second time Shaftesbury fell from power, was arraigned for high treason, and, although the jury ignored the bill of indictment, fled to Holland, where he died in 1683.

His friendship with Shaftesbury.

Locke followed his patron to the Low Countries, and, during the troubles of James II's reign, found there a safe and tranquil retreat. Holland was full of illustrious exiles and malcontents, and Locke profited by their society. It is not to be supposed that his political sympathies or his metaphysical theories were very popular in his University; and accordingly, in 1684, he was deprived of his studentship at Christ Church, and was denounced as a factious and rebellious agitator and as a dangerous heresiarch in philosophy. Four years later he was able to turn the tables upon his enemies. He returned to England in the fleet which conveyed Queen Mary from Holland to assume her share in the crown; and, from this time onwards, he enjoyed a brilliant and

Life of Locke after the Revolution.

useful career. He took a prominent share in Montagu's most difficult and critical recall and re-issue of the silver coinage, which was probably the most vitally important feature of William and Mary's reign; and, in the same year (1696), became a member of the new council of trade. He was at this time an old man, and his weak health obliged him in 1700 to retire. During the last four years of his life he resided at Oates in Essex, the seat of his friend Sir Francis Masham. Lady Masham, an accomplished and intellectual woman, was a daughter of Ralph Cudworth, the Cambridge Platonist; and the Oxford philosopher was thoroughly welcome under her roof. He died in 1704, and was buried at High Laver, near Oates. His personal character seems to have been unusually blameless and perfect, and his high philosophical ideals found an echo in his life. He had, on his return to England, formed the acquaintance of Sir Isaac Newton, who had been employed, like himself, in the public service; but, somewhere about 1692, certain untoward events, of which the principal was the accidental burning of his papers, seem to have shaken, if not to have overthrown the balance of Newton's mind for a season. Querulous, suspicious, and irritable, he picked a quarrel with Locke, whom he accused of "embroiling him with women, and other things." Locke, however, treated the charge with delicacy and forbearance, and by gentle expostulations and wise advice, re-established a good understanding that was never again interrupted.

His retirement and death.

Character and relations with Newton.

§ 2. Judged by modern canons of taste, Locke's style is dull, bald, and prosaic. Nevertheless, it is an excellent example of the colourless style which is the general feature of his epoch, and it has the additional advantage of being exactly the thing he meant it to be, neither more nor less—eminently correct and plain, full of common-sense, and free from undue pedantry. He himself attached importance to an easy narrative style, and, in his *Thoughts on Education*, he expresses himself emphatically upon the necessity of critical study and labour "to get a facility, clearness, and elegancy" in writing English. All these he possessed in the degree which was then exactly appropriate, and to underrate his style is simply to reduce the style of his age to its lowest terms. It is impossible for anyone who is not a professed philosopher to estimate the place which this correct writer occupies in the history of his science. His theories have suffered from a reaction; his system has been proved to be neither deep nor permanent enough to stand the test of more recent application; like Machiavelli, his arguments, expedient in their own day, are found less useful in another, and involve consequences which, in a different state of things, are foreign to his aim. But the *Essay concerning Human Understanding* has kept its place among the text-books of metaphysics, and

Locke's style.

the author's name is a landmark in the history of English philosophy.

The *Essay* was the work of his life. It occupied him for eighteen years, and he seems to have brought its material into shape, for the most part, during his exile in the Low Countries. His first separately published work was, however, his *First Letter on Toleration*, which appeared at Gouda in 1689. This was in Latin, but was immediately translated into French and English. Its sequels, the *Second and Third Letters*, were published anonymously in 1690. Locke's ground had been already occupied, to some extent, by two far more eloquent works, Jeremy Taylor's *Liberty of Prophesying*, and Milton's immortal *Areopagitica*, but his method was very different. As a rationalist and sceptic, he drew his arguments less from Scriptural and patristic authority than Taylor; as the disciple of common-sense, he depended more upon close reasoning and considerations of practical utility than Milton. Of course, there is no trace in Locke's work of that gorgeous and imposing rhetoric which glows and blazes all through the *Areopagitica*; but perhaps Locke's calm logic has not contributed less powerfully to establish an universal conviction of the justice of his cause. In 1690 there also appeared his *Two Treatises of Government*, which were undertaken as a counterblast to the theories of divine right and passive obedience which were still held by the extreme monarchical party, and nowhere so firmly as at Oxford; and, in consequence, as a logical justification of William's succession to the crown. Its especial object was to provide an effective answer to Sir Robert Filmer's *Patriarcha*, which had been published ten years before, and had presented the Royalist party with a manual defending divine right and its kindred doctrines in their full crudeness, but applying to them the resources of learning and ingenuity. Filmer's theory was that monarchical government, as the representative of the patriarchal authority of primitive times, claims from the subject an unlimited obedience. Patriarchal authority is the image of the power naturally possessed by a parent over his offspring; and this, in its turn, is the same in nature as the power of the Creator over his creature. As the Creator's power is essentially infinite, it follows, said Filmer, that all the others are so likewise. Locke, on the other hand, sought for the origin of government, and, consequently, of the ground of authority on the one hand and of obedience on the other, in the common interest of society. It is lawful, he said, to acquiesce in any form of polity which secures that interest, while none that fails to secure it can claim exemption from resistance on the ground of its authority. He further investigates the origin of society, and discovers that its foundation rests upon the great and fertile principle of property and individual interest.

The "Letters on Toleration."

The "Treatises of Government."

§ 3. 1690, further, was the year of the *Essay concerning Human Understanding*. Thus, it will be seen, all Locke's most important contributions to philosophy were produced at a birth, when he was full of years and honour. The *Essay* was, however, the epitome of the reflections and researches of his whole life, and he devoted to it all his powers of close deduction and accurate observation. His object was to give a rational and clear account of the nature of the human mind, of the real character of our ideas, and of the manner in which they are presented to the consciousness. He attributes them all, whatever be their nature, to two, and only two, sources, the first of which he calls sensation, and the second reflection. His theory thus opposes the notion that there are any innate ideas, that is, ideas which have existed in the mind independently of impressions made upon the senses, or of those impressions when compared, recollected, or combined, by the judgment, memory, or imagination. Locke's reasoning is eminently inductive; he was the first person to apply the method of experiment and observation to the obscure phenomena of mental operations; and thus he is to be regarded as the most illustrious disciple of Bacon, whose mode of reasoning he applied to a field of research usually considered to lie beyond the reach of *à posteriori* logic. If his conclusions are too speciously fitted to the popular taste of his age, his method is, at any rate, accompanied by a shrewd and careful observation which makes it very valuable. The following brief analysis of the work may be found useful to the student:—

"Essay concerning Human Understanding" (1690).

Its theory.

In Book I, which consists of four chapters, Locke enquires into the nature of the understanding, and demonstrates that there exist neither innate speculative, nor innate practical principles. Book II, containing thirty-three chapters, is devoted to the examination of the nature of ideas—first simple ideas, and then ideas of solidity, space, duration, number, infinity, and the like. He then passes to the ideas of pleasure and pain, of substance, of relations, as, for example, of cause and effect, and concludes with the important question of the association of ideas. Book III, divided into eleven chapters, is a most original and masterly investigation of the nature and properties of language, of its relation to the ideas of which it is the vehicle, and of its abuses and imperfections. This, in the present day, when parts of Locke's general theory are open to doubt, is the most valuable portion of the essay. Book IV, which is in twenty-one chapters, discusses knowledge in general, its degrees, its extent, and its reality. This brings us to the nature of truth, of our knowledge of existence, of our knowledge of the existence of a God, and of other beings. Then follow various important investigations relating to judgment, probability, reason, faith, and the degrees of intellectual assent; and, after some reflections on enthusiasm

Analysis of the work.

and on wrong assent, or error, the volume ends with some considerations upon the division of sciences.

It was unavoidable that the portion of the work which investigates sensation should be more interesting and satisfactory than the portion treating of the obscure phenomena of reflection; but, even in our dissent from the details of the main theory, we must not forget to do justice to the clearness of the argument, its freedom from any parade of learning, and the solid mass of well-noted and well-arranged fact which forms its groundwork.

§ 4. Locke's principal minor work is his essay on *Education*, which has, without doubt, had some practical bearing in the quarter which it was intended to reach. It complains severely of that exclusive attention to mere philology which prevailed in the education of the seventeenth century, and in no country more than in England; and, with this, it advocates a more generous, liberal, and apparently useful system, both in the choice of the subject-matter to be taught and in the mode of conveying instruction. The pupil's own conscientiousness is to become a substitute for the tyranny of force and authority usual in schools. This theory, says Sir Henry Craik, "has that speciousness that comes from basing its dictates on a natural development, which minimised difficulties, and paid a complimentary homage to the tendencies of human nature"—and it must be owned that this free-and-easy method is very successful in breeding prigs. Rousseau, in his *Émile*, did not scruple to transfer some humane and philosophical ideas from Locke, and ingeniously confused them with his own absurd and extravagant theories. Indeed, Locke's works, educational and metaphysical, were unceremoniously ransacked by many French writers of his own and the subsequent period; nor were these appropriators often solicitous of pointing out the sources from which they drew their ideas.

Essay on "Education" (1693).

A little later came out a treatise on *The Reasonableness of Christianity* (1695), which serves to defend Locke from the charges of irreligion and materialism brought against him by de Maistre and others. It must be owned, however, that, if Locke was not a materialist himself, his reasoning has only one logical tendency; and the tone of this religious pamphlet is marked by the patronising benevolence of one who prefers reason to revelation, and thinks of one as the natural antithesis of the other. A further pamphlet, *Of the Conduct of the Understanding* (1706), appeared, with other posthumous essays, after its author's death. It contains a series of reflections upon all those natural defects or acquired evil habits of the mind which unfit it for the task of acquiring and retaining knowledge. Its acuteness and scope of observation are certainly not inferior to the chief traits of the *Essay*, and the smaller work forms, as it was intended to form, an excellent and interesting supplement to the larger.

Later essays.

§ 5. It is now necessary that we should consider the divinity of the period immediately succeeding the Restoration. In no other form of writing is the change which took place in prose style so conspicuous. Barrow was only seventeen years younger than Taylor; Pearson was born in the same year with that great master of Caroline prose; and yet the style of both these writers is as different as it well can be from the glowing, eloquent periods of Taylor's discourses. The name of ISAAC BARROW is the distinctive name of this period. His acquirements were almost universal, and his sermons, to say nothing of his other works, have a power and majesty which are common to no other prose writer of the end of his century. Barrow was the son of a London merchant, linen-draper to Charles I. His uncle, a fellow of Peterhouse at Cambridge, became afterwards Bishop, first of Sodor and Man, and then of St. Asaph. The family was strongly Royalist, and his father followed Prince Charles into exile after Worcester. Barrow himself was educated at Charterhouse and at Felstead School, and was entered at his uncle's college of Peterhouse. However, the uncle was ejected by the Parliamentary Commissioners, and the nephew went to Trinity instead. It is on record that, at school, his disposition had been violent and quarrelsome, and that he was perpetually fighting with his schoolfellows; but of this nothing remained in after-life save the energy and vigour which he applied to his intellectual pursuits, and a very high personal courage. At Cambridge he studied everything. Undoubtedly his *forte* was mathematics; but he was also proficient in anatomy, chemistry, and botany; and his classical knowledge eventually gained him the Regius professorship of Greek. He became a fellow of Trinity in 1649, and in 1654 was a candidate for the Greek chair, but was rejected as being a Royalist. After this he went abroad for four years, travelling by way of France and Italy to Constantinople and Smyrna, and returning home by way of Germany and Holland. While sailing in the Mediterranean his ship encountered an Algerine pirate, and the fighting powers which had gained him a name at Charterhouse were brought into play with great success. He came back, equipped with fresh scientific knowledge, and with a good working acquaintance with Oriental languages. In 1659 he obtained his coveted Greek professorship; in 1662 he was appointed to the chair of geometry in Gresham College; and, in 1663, he added to his unique distinctions the Lucasian professorship of mathematics at Cambridge. His mathematical fame has been eclipsed by that of his pupil Newton, to whom he resigned the Lucasian professorship in 1669; but, after Newton, he was certainly the greatest mathematician of a college whose scientific eminence in his time is one of the most brilliant features of English

Post-Restoration divinity.

ISAAC BARROW (1630–1677).

His universal knowledge.

His travels.

His professorships.

intellectual history. It was a Master of Trinity, John Wilkins, Bishop of Chester, who had been most active in founding the Royal Society, and Barrow was one of its first fellows. However, Barrow had taken Orders in 1659, and he devoted himself to a theological career from 1669 onwards. His sermons, many of them preached in London, became famous. Charles II was delighted with his preaching, appointed him one of his chaplains, and eventually procured his election to the mastership of Trinity (1672). In 1675 he was Vice-Chancellor of the University; but in 1677, while on a visit to London in connection with college business, he caught a fever and died, at the early age of forty-seven. He was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Barrow elected master of Trinity.

His death.

To say with Mr. Gosse that "it would only be affectation to treat Barrow as a living force in literature" is no doubt true in itself, but, at the same time, suggests an error. His reputation in his own day was deservedly great; his appearance in the pulpit was insignificant, but, when he began to speak, his oratory was irresistible. His sermons were certainly very long, and on one occasion the organ of Westminster Abbey struck up to "play him down." However, in their published form, they underwent considerable revision; quotations were left out, and sentences were put into a new shape. The consequence of this is an almost overladen pregnancy of thought, which is somewhat confusing to the most powerful intellects. At the same time the style is undeniably imposing; every line bears the stamp of an unconscious power, a vigour of mind to which no subtlety is too arduous, no argument too obscure to follow out. Barrow was certainly at his ease with the most ponderous difficulties of theology, although it is doubtful whether this familiarity rendered his style more easy in itself. The distinction, which we have already remarked, between Barrow and Jeremy Taylor is essentially the distinction betweeen early and late Stewart prose, between the prose of imagination and the prose of common-sense. But Barrow's style is certainly superior to the fashionable manner of his time; it is "correct" and fluent, but it has a solid life and strength of its own. Taylor, one might say, is the English Isocrates; Barrow is the Demosthenes of the English pulpit. His sermons are very numerous, and the most valuable of them are those which fall into series and deal with some dogmatic or controversial subject; thus one set is devoted to the clauses of the Lord's prayer, another to the creed, another to the decalogue, another to the two greater sacraments, and so on — all treated with exhaustive and regular method. The student who embraces the task of examining the prose work of this period cannot do better than read Barrow if he wants to see its most favourable side.

Barrow's sermons.

Their style.

Methodical character of Barrow's works.

Chatham recommended Barrow to his son as the finest model of eloquence; and Walter Savage Landor, with a rather perverse eccentricity, did not hesitate to place him above the greatest of ancient philosophers. "Plato and Xenophon," says one of the people in his *Imaginary Conversations*, "as men of thought and genius, might walk without brushing their skirts between these two covers," striking his hand on a volume of Barrow.

§ 6. Barrow's immediate predecessor in the mastership of Trinity was JOHN PEARSON, who was the son of the rector of Great Snoring in Norfolk. He was an Etonian, a scholar, and eventually, in 1634, a fellow, of King's, proceeding to Holy Orders in 1639. He then became chaplain to the Lord Keeper Finch, and rector of Thorington in Suffolk. Although a Royalist by conviction, he held, during the Commonwealth, a lectureship at St. Clement's, Eastcheap. At the Restoration, he was made Master of Jesus College, Cambridge, archdeacon of Surrey, and a prebendary in Ely cathedral; in 1661 he was elected to the Lady Margaret professorship of Divinity, and in 1662 became Master of Trinity. He was a member of the Savoy conference in that year, and aided in the foundation of the Royal Society. In 1673 he closed his list of preferments with the bishopric of Chester. He is buried in the north transept of his cathedral. There is little to be said of his style, which is in no way remarkable; but, in his *Exposition of the Creed*, he made an immortal contribution to Anglican theology. This work consists of a series of lectures delivered at St. Clement's, Eastcheap, about 1654. It was published in 1659. As a manual of the fundamental principles of Christianity, it will always keep a very high place, and its value is increased by the fact that, while the text is totally free from learned allusions, the notes contain a copious store of solid scholarship. Pearson was a voluminous writer, both in English and Latin; but his minor works are almost entirely forgotten, and his name is now exclusively associated with his one great book.

JOHN PEARSON (1613–1686).

Pearson on the Creed (1659).

§ 7. Even to-day, the works of JOHN TILLOTSON, although not often read, have a celebrity which is, perhaps, more general than that of Barrow's sermons. His father was a Puritan clothier at Sowerby Bridge, near Halifax, and sent him to Clare Hall at Cambridge, doubtless in order that he might be under the influence of Ralph Cudworth, the great republican divine. He took his Master's degree in 1654, and, on leaving Cambridge, was for some time a private tutor. His amiable disposition led him to look upon religious and political differences with an easy impartiality; and, after the Restoration, his opinions suffered no violence. As a member of the Savoy conference, he was on the Presbyterian side; but he had already taken Orders in the Church of

JOHN TILLOTSON (1630–1694).

England, and assented to the Act of Uniformity. On the deprivation of Edmund Calamy, he was offered his living, but refused it. However, he was presented to another, and became (1663) preacher at Lincoln's Inn, where his sermons attracted large congregations. His theological position was eminently safe, and, as a Protestant latitudinarian, he was thoroughly acceptable to the fashionable conscience of the time, satisfying its dread of extremes, and allaying its faint spiritual anxieties. In 1670 he became a prebendary in Canterbury cathedral. He was made dean of Canterbury in 1672, and, in 1689, dean of St. Paul's, where he already held a prebend. His popularity seems to have been too strong for his scruples; for, in 1690, when Archbishop Sancroft refused to take the oaths, Tillotson was offered the primacy, and accepted it. He had attended William, Lord Russell, in prison, and there can be little doubt that his sympathies, such as they were, went with the new order of things; but he had hesitated over the offer at first, and, when he at last accepted it, he found himself in an awkward situation. He died in 1694, and is buried in St. Lawrence Jewry.

His promotion to the archbishopric.

Whatever his opinions were—and Mr. Saintsbury says that his latitudinarianism was "the shoe-horn to draw on the deism of the next century"—his style exercised a great influence as an extreme example of easy and fluent correctness. It suffers from an affectation of familiarity, and consequently from a triviality of image and illustration; but in his reasoning there is a good deal of artifice and even sophistry, cunningly concealed beneath an air of candour which never deserted him. The studied colloquial tone of his sentences renders them singularly unmusical; but this is really the chief defect of a style which otherwise is logical, and contrives, without attempting any high flights, to give an impression of eloquence. It is the style of a man of the world, who aims at conquering fashionable indifference by counterfeiting it as far as possible. The final impression derived from such an attempt is rather unfortunate.

His style.

§ 8. ROBERT SOUTH enjoyed the reputation of the "wittiest churchman" of his time, and his violence as a controversialist forms a striking contrast to Tillotson's *laissez-faire* attitude. He was a native of Hackney, and received early correction from Busby at Westminster. He proceeded to Christ Church, where he was elected to a junior studentship in 1651. While at Oxford he wrote a copy of Latin verses congratulating Cromwell on his peace with the Dutch; and, although this was purely an academic exercise, his enemies, in after years, made a handle of it against him. But, all through his career, he was a striking example of the out-and-out Oxford Tory, and was the leading divine, from a literary point of view, of the "high-flying" party, going all lengths in maintaining the doctrine of passive obedience and

ROBERT SOUTH (1634–1716).

non-resistance. He took Orders during the Commonwealth, probably receiving them at the hands of the deprived Bishop Sydserf of Galloway; in 1660 he became public orator in the University of Oxford, and was also chaplain to Clarendon. His subsequent preferment included a prebendal stall at Westminster (1663), a canonry of Christ Church (1670), and the rectory of Islip, near Oxford (1678). It is said that James II's behaviour to the chapter of Christ Church disgusted him, and he took the oaths at the Revolution. However, he remained a very independent Tory, and, when William Sherlock, after figuring as a nonjuror, came back to his allegiance, South attacked him bitterly. Later on he took the part of Sacheverell, and declined Harley's offer of the bishopric of Rochester and deanery of Westminster. He survived the fall of the Tory ministry, and died at Westminster in 1716. He is buried in the Abbey. He was a man of extraordinary learning and, although his politics were freely mingled with his religion, of great piety. His reputation rested, to some extent, upon his humour, and he did not scruple to introduce witty anecdotes and repartees into his sermons. Consequently, he has often been accredited with much of that floating capital of pleasantries which is shared by Sydney Smith and later divines. As a humorist he does not appeal very much to the sense of the present day. But his prose, which is contained in his volumes of sermons, is eloquent, weighty, and rhythmical. He dealt in tropes and learned figures, and had a fancy for quaint phrases, which takes us back to the style of an earlier age. To give him his exact place is difficult: he does not stand so high as Barrow; but his intellect, if not so comprehensive, is of much the same order; and to depreciate him in such a comparison is to undervalue an interesting style, and to pay an insufficient tribute to his learning.

South's Toryism after the Revolution.

His learning and wit: their influence on his style.

§ 9. One of the divines with whom South fell out in his lifetime was EDWARD STILLINGFLEET, called, from his personal beauty and piety, "the beauty of holiness." He was born at Cranborne, on the borders of Dorset and Hampshire, and, after passing through the schools of Cranborne and the neighbouring town of Ringwood, he entered St. John's College, Cambridge, where he was elected, in 1653, to a fellowship. Like Tillotson, he left Cambridge to become a private tutor: he took orders from the deprived Bishop Brownrig of Exeter, and was presented in 1657 to the living of Sutton Coldfield in Warwickshire. Later on he became preacher at the Rolls Chapel, and, in 1665, rector of St. Andrew's, Holborn. In 1667 he became a prebendary of St. Paul's, and, in 1678, dean. In 1689 he was appointed Bishop of Worcester, and was succeeded at St. Paul's by Tillotson. When Tillotson died in 1694, Stillingfleet was the popular favourite for the primacy, but was passed

EDWARD STILLINGFLEET (1635–1699).

over in favour of Tenison. He died at Westminster, and is buried in Worcester cathedral. He wrote excellent, cool-headed English, and enjoyed a prodigious reputation as a writer, which his *Origines Sacræ* (1662) maintains. Most of his books, however, are purely controversial, directed against heretics and nonjurors, and their interest and value are, on the whole, ephemeral. He wrote for his age, and not for all time. His chief controversy was with Locke, and began in a dispute over a book (1696) by the deist Toland, which was not likely to make any lasting impression on the age. This led to an attack upon Locke's rationalism, to which Locke replied, and, being perhaps the more acute reasoner of the two, as well as being in touch with public opinion, was considered to have the better of the argument. There is a legend to the effect that Stillingfleet died of mortification at this defeat.

Ephemeral value of his work.

THOMAS SPRAT was an eminently common-sense prelate. He was born at Beaminster in Dorset, and went to Wadham College, Oxford, of which he became a fellow in 1657. His first love was poetry, and, at Cromwell's death, he wrote an ode in the Cowleio-Pindaric manner, which was published in the same volume with Dryden's well-known stanzas. Although he took Orders at the Restoration he never devoted himself to theological writing, save in the matter of sermons. He is said to have had a hand in *The Rehearsal*—he was chaplain to its chief author, the Duke of Buckingham. But his principal service to literature was his *History of the Royal Society* (1667). Like so many other churchmen of the period, he had actively co-operated in the founding of that body, and had himself been first and foremost in the advocacy of scientific study. His other works include his *Life of Cowley* (1668) and his *History of the Rye House Plot* (1685). He was one of Charles II's chaplains (1676); was given a canonry at Westminster in 1669, another at Windsor in 1681, and was consecrated Bishop of Rochester in 1684. He ruled his see wisely—if we may judge by his charges—for more than twenty-eight years, and died at Rochester in 1713. He is buried in Westminster Abbey.

THOMAS SPRAT (1635–1713).

Sprat had very definite views upon the matter of style, which he pronounced very clearly in his book on the Royal Society; and certainly if anyone attained to what he calls "a close, naked, natural way of speaking," or succeeded in reducing style to "a mathematical plainness," it was himself. By totally avoiding quips and fancies he tutored his prose to a level regularity; and, combining with this terseness a certain vigour, he produced work whose quality is really very high, and has an individual interest of its own. In later years he received praise from Johnson, and, in more recent times, from Macaulay.

Sprat's views upon style.

It would be a great mistake to omit from this array of

prelates the name of THOMAS KEN, although he shone as a bishop rather than as a writer. He was the son of a London lawyer, and was born at one or other of the Hertfordshire Berkhampsteads; but, his parents dying, he probably lived for some time in the house of his brother-in-law, the famous Izaak Walton. He was a scholar of Winchester, and proceeded, in 1656, to Hart Hall, Oxford, until a vacancy at New College occurred. In 1661 he took his degree, and became tutor of his college, taking Holy Orders soon afterwards. He held numerous preferments between 1663 and 1679, when he went for a year to the Hague as chaplain to Princess Mary; but returned to his old home at Winchester, and was made a royal chaplain. He was chaplain to the fleet on Lord Dartmouth's expedition to Tangier. Charles II had marked him out for favour, owing to his refusal to lodge Nell Gwyn in his house at Winchester, the firm consistency of which had appealed to the king's better nature; and consequently, when the see of Bath and Wells fell vacant, Charles insisted on Ken's preferment to it. He was consecrated in 1685, and attended Charles on his deathbed not long afterwards. He also attended Monmouth on the scaffold after Sedgemoor. He was one of the seven bishops who were imprisoned in 1687 for their opposition to James II; but he refused to take the oaths at the Revolution, and was deprived in 1691. For the last twenty years of his life he lived, for the most part, at Lord Weymouth's house of Longleat, where he died in 1711, and was buried beneath the eastern wall of St. John's church at Frome Selwood. His piety and saintly life were the example of his age; but he produced very little that is really worth reading. But, if hymn-writing is a department of literature, the hymns which he wrote for the scholars at Winchester are among the noblest in the language, and are familiar to all who have never heard of his prose, or even of himself. It is characteristic of Ken's earnest devotion that he applied his work to the immediate spiritual needs of those with whom he was most nearly in touch. His *Manual of Prayers for the Use of the Winchester Scholars* (1694) connects him with that city and school with which his life was so closely bound up, and his *Prayers for the Use of all resorting to the Baths at Bath* (1692) show the interest which he took in the chief town of his diocese.

THOMAS KEN (1637–1711).

His hymns.

South's controversy with WILLIAM SHERLOCK has already been mentioned. Sherlock was born in Southwark, was an Etonian, and went to Peterhouse, Cambridge. In 1669 he became rector of St. George's, Botolph Lane, and took an active part in controversy. His opposition to the faction obnoxious to the Duke of York procured him the mastership of the Temple, but, under James II, he was not so happy. At the Revolution he refused the oaths, was deprived, and in his retirement, wrote his famous

WILLIAM SHERLOCK (1641?–1707).

Practical Discourse concerning Death (1689). However, he turned his coat not long after, took the oaths of allegiance and abjuration, and accepted the deanery of St. Paul's, which Tillotson had just left for Canterbury. This stirred up strong feeling against him, and his publication, rather earlier, of a *Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity* (1690) against the Socinians, brought South about his ears. He lived through it all, however, and died in 1707. He had resigned his mastership of the Temple in 1704, in favour of his eldest son, who became even more famous than his father, and enjoyed still greater preferment. Whether the *Discourse concerning Death* is really a valuable work must be left to the judgment of the individual reader; but it is not by any means a work of genius. Of the group of authors of which we have just spoken, Sherlock is certainly the dullest and the least characteristic; but, as a controversialist, he handled his weapons boldly, if not skilfully.

The Royal Society and the advance in physical science.

§ 10. The connection of so many of these theologians with the Royal Society reminds us that, although the subject is not directly literary, we are nevertheless bound to take account of that tremendous and universal progress in natural science and physical research, which, with its positive theories, had to do as much as anything with the direction of contemporary thought and style. Moreover, although most of the scientific works of the day were composed in Latin, the universal medium of learned thought, many of our great scientists fortunately chose to write in their own tongue, or at least condescended to publish English versions of their discoveries, and may thus be added to the category of English authors. There are few more surprising episodes in the history of human knowledge than this outbreak of practical philosophy, and its advance towards the end of the seventeenth century. These phenomena were visible in Germany, in Holland, in France, and in England, and nowhere more than in the last country. It was only natural that the lively effect of Bacon's writings and methods should be peculiarly evident among his fellow-countrymen. The seventeenth century in England saw the rapid development of free institutions and open discussion, and from these, at its close, sprang, there is little doubt, a passion for unfettered research, a spirit of enquiry, and an open freedom of expression in doubtful cases of opinion.

A very prominent part in the cultivation and the spread of experimental research, in all branches of physics and natural history, was played by the Royal Society, which, meeting at first as a desultory club in the houses of a few learned and ingenious men, was incorporated in 1662 by Charles II. Since then the debt of the world to its illustrious labours has been immeasurable.

Among the founders of this corporation none was more active than JOHN WILKINS, Bishop of Chester, who was Master of

Trinity College, Cambridge, for rather less than a year (1659–60), having been previously warden of Wadham. Wilkins was a most energetic and ingenious man, who, with the signal services that, by his writing and conversation, were rendered to the cause of science, combined a vivacious and almost extravagant love for inventions. He was essentially a projector, and, at a period when the first wonderful results of the experimental methods had helped to destroy the balance of the calmest minds and to obscure the distinction between the practical and the visionary, we can hardly wonder that his ardour should have carried him beyond the bounds of common-sense, and should have led him to propose seriously, among other Utopian schemes, a plan by which it would be possible to fly to the moon. Wilkins was a theological writer and preacher of high reputation, but his name is now chiefly associated with his projects and inventions, and in particular with the prominent part he took in the foundation of the Royal Society. He married the sister of Oliver Cromwell, and his stepdaughter was married to Tillotson. His chief works are the treatise called *The Discovery of a World in the Moon* (1638), which contains, appended to its third edition (1640), the chimerical plan we have already mentioned; and *An Essay towards a real Character and a Philosophical Language*, printed by order of the Royal Society in 1668.

JOHN WILKINS (1614–1672).

§ 11. Even before the Royal Society, the progress of physical science had been very rapid. WILLIAM GILBERT had laid (1600) the foundations of magnetic research; WILLIAM HARVEY had made the immortal discovery of the circulation of the blood (1628). But to the institution of a great scientific corporation, with a kind of central authority, is due the concentration of the labours of several investigators upon one special form of research. We may mention the contemporary, or nearly contemporary work of Newton in optics, astronomy, and celestial mechanics; of Flamsteed, Halley, and others, in the combined departments of careful observation and the application of convenient mathematical formulas to the practical solution of problems in astronomy and navigation; of Boyle, in chemical and pneumatic science; of Ray, Derham, Willoughby, and Sydenham in physiology, natural history, and medicine. Most of these great men, independently of their scientific writings, most of which, like Newton's *Principia*, were, as we have said, in Latin, contributed in a greater or less proportion to the vernacular literature of their own country. Thus Newton left writings in English upon the prophecies and other subjects of a biblical nature, while Boyle enjoyed a high reputation for his moral and religious writings. And it is at once remarkable and pleasant to see the unanimous consent with which these

Earlier scientists: WILLIAM GILBERT (1540–1603); WILLIAM HARVEY (1578–1657).

Men of science after the Restoration.

illustrious philosophers, all men of extraordinary acumen and caution, and all accustomed, from the nature of their pursuits, to take nothing for granted, but to weigh and balance evidence with the most severe exactness, agreed in the intensity of their religious convictions. Those habits of physical investigation, which are so often ignorantly accused as unfavourable to the habit of belief, and are certainly dangerous to its more dogmatic forms, seem to have led the most powerful and enquiring minds only the more irresistibly to a firm conviction of the truths of revealed religion.

§ 12. SIR ISAAC NEWTON was born of a respectable, but not wealthy family, at the hamlet of Woolsthorpe, by Grantham, and was educated at the Grantham grammar school. From his early boyhood he showed the greatest taste and aptitude for mechanical invention; and, entering at Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1661, he made such rapid progress in mathematical studies that, in 1669, Barrow resigned the Lucasian professorship in his favour. The greater part of Newton's life was passed within the quiet walls of Trinity, where he formed the centre of an illustrious group of mathematicians; and to-day his name is accounted the chief glory of the college. It was in Trinity that he worked out those discoveries and demonstrations in mechanics, optics, and astronomy which have placed him in the very foremost rank of the benefactors of mankind. We ought not to forget that among his Cambridge friends was the precocious genius Roger Cotes (1682–1716), whose fame rests upon Newton's own words, "Had Cotes lived we might have known something!" Newton sat in more than one Parliament as member for his University; but he appears to have been of too reserved and retiring a character to take an active part in political discussion. In 1695 he was appointed master of the Mint, and presided over its fortunes at the critical period of Montagu's bold recall and re-issue of the specie. With remarkable simplicity and readiness he abandoned his sublime and unique researches and devoted all his energy and attention to the public duties committed to his charge. He even writes with an almost pettish querulousness to upbraid friends who had consulted him about "mathematical things," as he calls them, when he was entirely occupied with public business. In 1703 he was made President of the Royal Society, and, two years later, was knighted by Queen Anne. He lived in London during his later years and took no active part in the terrible quarrels which disturbed Trinity from the opening of Bentley's mastership onwards. He died in 1727. His character, which, as we have already seen in mentioning his relations with Locke, was marred by a coldness and suspiciousness of temper, was, in every other respect, the type of patriotic, scholarly, and

Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727).

Mathematical society at Trinity.

Newton in public affairs.

Newton's character.

intellectual virtue. His modesty was as great as his genius, and he invariably ascribed his discoveries to patient attention rather than to any unusual capacity of intellect. His English writings, discourses on prophecy and the chronology of Holy Scripture, are written clearly and without pedantry, and manifest his intense piety. His theological tendencies were undoubtedly towards a form of Unitarianism: the logical mind is too often incapable of distinguishing between the mysteries of the faith and the fallacies of human experience. As a commentator on the prophecies, he must not be confounded with Bishop Newton, whose work on the prophecies appeared later in the eighteenth century. Newton's literary glory, however, will always rest mainly upon his purely scientific works, of which the *Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica* (1687) and the invaluable treatise on *Optics* (1704), the practical foundation of that science, are so well known that to mention them is hardly necessary.

His style.

§ 13. JOHN RAY, together with WILLIAM DERHAM (1657–1735) and FRANCIS WILLUGHBY (1635–1672), combined the descriptive side of natural history with moral and religious eloquence of a very high order; they seem never to be weary of proclaiming the wisdom, goodness, and providence of God in the works of creation. Ray was the first to elevate natural history to the rank of a science. ROBERT BOYLE, a son of the first Earl of Cork, born at Lismore Castle, was remarkable as a scientific man and as a pious layman. His life was a consistent course of self-abnegation and of devotion to his studies. Not only did he decline the presidency of the Royal Society in 1680, but he also refused the offer of the provostship of Eton and of a peerage. "No Englishman of the seventeenth century," said Hallam, "after Lord Bacon, raised to himself so high a reputation in experimental philosophy as Robert Boyle; it has even been remarked that he was born in the year of Bacon's death, as the person destined by nature to succeed him—an eulogy which would be extravagant if it implied any parallel between the genius of the two, but hardly so if we look upon Boyle as the most faithful, the most patient, the most successful disciple who carried forward the experimental philosophy of Bacon. His works occupy six large volumes in quarto (1772). They may be divided into theological or metaphysical, and physical or experimental. The metaphysical treatises, to use the word in a large sense, of Boyle, or rather those concerning natural theology, are very perspicuous, very free from system, and such as bespeak an independent lover of truth. His Disquisition on Final Causes—*i.e. The Origin of Forms and Qualities* (1666)—was a well-timed vindication of that palmary argument against the paradox of the Cartesians, who had denied the validity of an inference from the manifest adaptation of means to ends

JOHN RAY (1627–1705) *and the natural historians.*

ROBERT BOYLE (1627–1691).

in the universe to an intelligent Providence. Boyle takes a more philosophic view of the principle of final causes than had been found in many theologians, who weakened the argument itself by the presumptuous hypothesis that man was the sole object of Providence in the creation. His greater knowledge of physiology led him to perceive that there are both animal and what he calls cosmical ends in which man has no concern. He was the founder of the Boyle lectures, whose object was the defence of natural and revealed religion. He must not be confounded with his elder brother, Roger Boyle, the author of *Parthenissa* and the bridegroom of Suckling's *Ballad upon a Wedding*, nor with his grandnephew, Charles Boyle, the opponent of Bentley.

§ 14. One of the most remarkable writers of this period—at least, from a literary point of view—was THOMAS BURNET, author of *The Sacred Theory of the Earth*. He was a Yorkshireman, born at Croft on the Durham border, educated at Northallerton school, and at Clare Hall, Cambridge, where Cudworth the Platonist was master, and Tillotson tutor. In 1657 he was elected fellow of Christ's, having followed Cudworth thither, and, after a life spent in tuition of various kinds, became Master of the Charterhouse, where he died and was buried. His *Telluris Theoria Sacra* appeared in Latin in 1681; but, following the wishes of Charles II, to whose notice Tillotson had introduced the book, Burnet published a translation of it in 1684. Later on, in 1689, he brought out the second part, which, as the first had dealt with the Deluge and the general destruction then inflicted on the earth, deals with the final conflagration of the material globe, and, in a further sequel, with the new heavens and new earth. No man was ever so fascinated and blinded by his own theories and by the very vastness of his speculation; and the result, if unscientific, is at all events the most eloquent production of its age. The style, with all its extravagance, has an almost indescribable picturesqueness, and there is a weight, a fervour about it that reminds us of Jeremy Taylor. Burnet is, in fact, from the point of view of his style, the relic of an earlier age—the age of glowing and imaginative prose, and of ardent rhetoric.

THOMAS BURNET (1635?–1715).

"*Sacred Theory of the Earth*" (1680).

We must not confound Thomas Burnet with GILBERT BURNET, politician and theologian. He was a native of Edinburgh, and was educated at Marischal College, Aberdeen. In 1661 he entered the Church of England, before the restoration of episcopacy, and, throughout his life, occupied the middle space between the extreme parties on both sides. He rose to favour at Court, and became a royal chaplain; he apparently won great renown as an extempore preacher. The chief interest of his connection with the Court lies, however, in the account which he gave to the

GILBERT BURNET (1643–1715).

world of the witty and infamous Rochester's deathbed repentance, the result of his own pious exhortations. But Burnet's favour at Court was of limited duration. He boldly remonstrated with Charles on his profligacy, and steadfastly defended William, Lord Russell, whose execution was the greatest and most senseless political crime of Charles II's reign. Consequently, falling into disgrace, he travelled on the Continent, and attached himself closely to William and Mary at the Hague. He became Mary's spiritual adviser, and his service and counsels were valued so highly by her and her husband that he accompanied William to England, and, after taking a very conspicuous part in controversy and political negotiation, was raised to the bishopric of Salisbury. In 1698 he was appointed preceptor to the Duke of Gloucester, son of the Princess Anne. He was an exemplary bishop, whose politics injured his theology, but not his piety. Dying in 1715, he left behind him the MS. of his most important work, the *History of his own Time*, which he directed to be published after the lapse of six years. It actually appeared in 1723. This work, consisting of memoirs of most of the important transactions in which he had been nearly concerned, is not at all unlike Clarendon's book, and is not of inferior value, although written from a point of view almost entirely opposite. Burnet is minute, familiar, and gossiping, but lively and trustworthy in the main as to facts; and no one who desires to make the acquaintance of a very critical and agitated period in English history can afford to leave him unread. The very ardour of his predilections—especially, of course, for William and Mary—gives a vivacity and value to his pictures of men and things; and, by comparing and weighing his statements with the spiteful criticisms of the opposite party, we learn to appreciate William's character properly. Burnet's other works include his *History of the Reformation* (1679-1714) and his famous *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles* (1699), which remains a classical commentary upon its difficult subject.

Burnet's "History of his own Time" (1721).

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

A.—OTHER THEOLOGICAL WRITERS.

GEORGE BULL (1634-1710), Bishop of St. Davids, a great opponent of Calvinism and its Augustinian tenets, was one of the greatest of those controversialists who defended Anglican principles, and is still regarded as a pillar of the English Church. His *Harmonia Apostolica* (1669-70) reconciles the apparent discrepancies between St. Paul and St. James, maintaining that the first ought to be interpreted through the second, as through a later authority. His celebrated *Defensio Fidei Nicenæ* (1685) was praised by Bossuet, and the *Judicium Ecclesiæ Catholicæ* (1694) was publicly approved by an

assembly of French clergy, who returned thanks to him through Bossuet's influence.

EDMUND CALAMY (1600–1666) was originally a clergyman of the Church of England and lecturer at Bury St. Edmunds, but afterwards a dissenting minister in London. He took part in *Smectymnuus* (1641), that attack upon episcopacy which Milton defended in his famous apology. Calamy's sermons are practical, although now and then we find political feelings overmastering the calmer style of the divine. His son, grandson, and great-grandson, all made their names in the history of Nonconformity.

RALPH CUDWORTH (1617–1688), Master of Clare and afterwards of Christ's College, and Regius Professor of Hebrew at Cambridge, was the chief of the Cambridge Platonists, that band of philosophers and scholars which included the pious Henry Mede and the philosophical poet Henry More. (See p. 263.) In 1678 Cudworth published the first part of his great work, *The True Intellectual System of the Universe*, an enormous folio whose sequel never appeared. As Harrington's *Oceana* was the political, so Cudworth's *Intellectual System*, although nominally it was directed against ancient philosophers, atheists and materialists, was the theological attempt to confute Hobbes. "Nor," says Hallam, "did any antagonist, perhaps, of that philosopher bring a more vigorous understanding to the combat. This understanding was not so much obstructed in its own exercise by a vast erudition, as it is sometimes concealed by it from the reader." Any adequate estimate of Cudworth is prevented by the fact that his voluminous work is merely a preface to a very large scheme which was never completed; and, on that account, it is scarcely fair to underrate him among the philosophers of his time. He deals entirely with the proofs of God's existence, treating the question in a manner which reminds us of the scholastic theologians and their method of statement and refutation. His fair statement of atheistical arguments laid him open, incredible as it may seem, to the ridiculous charge of favouring the atheists. We can hardly imagine that, had his work been completed, it would have altogether fulfilled its purpose, or that its diffuseness would have helped it. Cudworth left a daughter, Damaris, who married Sir Francis Masham, and is known as the friend of Locke. (See page 365.)

RICHARD CUMBERLAND (1631–1718) was made Bishop of Peterborough (1691) by William III, and was one of those divines who represented the sluggish churchmanship of the Revolution. He, too, was an anti-Hobbist, and contributed to the literature of the controversy a Latin treatise, *De Legibus Naturæ Disquisitio philosophica* (1672). His principal English work was an *Essay towards the Recovery of the Jewish Measures and Weights* (1686); but, unfortunately, he did not add to this technical subject, with which he was admirably qualified by learning and industry to deal, any of the necessary charms of style. He must not be confused with his grandson, Richard Cumberland, the comedy writer. (See p. 538.)

THOMAS ELLWOOD (1639–1713) learned Latin from Milton, and used to read aloud to the great poet during his blindness. He turned Quaker in 1659, and laboured diligently to extend the principles of his society. His *Autobiography* (1714), written clearly and attractively, is, without doubt, his best book; but, in addition, he wrote several polemical tracts—*e.g.* *The Foundation of Tithes Shaken* (1678), a *History of the Old and New Testaments* (1705–9), and a sacred poem, *Davideis* (1712), which, in spite of its title, owed nothing to Cowley's poem of the same name.

JOHN FLAVEL (1630?–1691), a Nonconformist divine at Dartmouth, wrote numerous devotional works which are still read by English Calvinists. Like many of the less political Nonconformists of the day, he was a man of fervent piety.

THEOPHILUS GALE (1628–1678), fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, is known as the author of a

learned work called *The Court of the Gentiles* (1669–1677), in which he attempts to prove that every European language springs from Hebrew, and that all heathen philosophy was borrowed from the Scriptures, or at least from the Jews. As a Nonconformist, he was deprived of his fellowship at the Restoration.

MATTHEW HENRY (1662–1714) was the son of Philip Henry (1631–1696), and became, like his father, an eminent Nonconformist divine. His well-known commentary on the Bible (1708–1710) still enjoys a certain popularity; its style is plain and concise.

JOHN HOWE (1630–1705), chaplain to Cromwell, was an eminent Independent minister, and wrote various theological treatises and sermons.

ROBERT LEIGHTON (1611–1684), Archbishop of Glasgow from 1670 to 1674, has earned a most illustrious reputation from his *Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Peter*. Its magnificent style almost takes us back to the Elizabethan age; but there is very little overcrowding of words, while the depth of its thought is amazing. Coleridge called attention to it in his *Aids to Reflection*, and although, unfortunately, the book is little read to-day, it has never wanted its students and admirers. It was published, with the rest of Leighton's *Remains*, between 1692 and 1708.

WILLIAM LOWTH (1660–1732), prebendary of Winchester and rector of Buriton, made valuable additions to the theology of his age in his *Commentaries* and his *Vindication of the Divine Authority of the Old and New Testaments* (1692). He was the father of the well-known Bishop Lowth. (See p. 503.)

JOHN OWEN (1616–1683) was the most famous of all the Independent divines, and a most voluminous writer. His *Exercitations on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (1668–1684) is his best known work. He was a man of great benevolence and piety, and wrote good, albeit rather featureless English. Under Cromwell, he was chosen to usurp the offices of dean of Christ Church and Vice-Chancellor of Oxford.

B.—SCOTTISH DIVINES.

SAMUEL RUTHERFORD (1600–1661).

THOMAS HALYBURTON (1674–1712).

THOMAS BOSTON (1677–1732).

During this age the Presbyterians and Nonconformists generally were much perturbed by the great "Marrow" controversy, the occasion of which was a book called *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*. It had been published in 1645, more than seventy years before Boston re-discovered it and started the dispute. This work was warmly received by one party, while another as warmly rejected it. It gave rise to much disturbance and contest. The author was commonly supposed to be one Edward Fisher, but his identity is uncertain.

The three writers mentioned above took part in the quarrel, all three of them divines of a severe and sombre cast. However, their massiveness of thought and richness of style contrast very favourably with the dull and formless theology which was produced by the later Puritans in England. Rutherford, the minister of Anwoth in Galloway, and principal of St. Mary's College, St. Andrews, is a remarkable instance of self-denial and devotion to his calling. He was deprived of his living in 1636 and exiled to Aberdeen. He took part in the Westminster Assembly, and died soon after the Restoration. He is mentioned by Milton in his sonnet on "The New Forcers of Conscience under the Long Parliament."

C.—OTHER PROSE WRITERS.

ELIAS ASHMOLE (1617–1692) was a learned antiquary, and married the daughter of Sir William Dugdale (see below). His chief work was *The Institutions, Laws, and Ceremonies of the Most Noble Order of the Garter* (1672). He wrote numerous other works, and was the founder of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, whose origin was a museum bequeathed to him by his friend Tradescant.

JOHN AUBREY (1626–1697) collected materials for many works, but published only one, the *Miscellanies* (1696), containing an account of popular superstitions, and bearing witness to his own credulity. This, however, does not represent the full extent of his learning or his literary value as one of the most agreeable of gossips.

EDWARD BROWNE (1644–1708) of Norwich and Trinity College, Cambridge, was the eldest son of Sir Thomas Browne, and rose to great eminence as a doctor, being a physician to Charles II, and, for the last four years of his life, President of the Royal College of Physicians. He did some work as a translator, but his most memorable book is his *Brief Account of Some Travels* in the Balkan peninsula and the Austrian dominions. He went as far as Larissa in Thessaly, out of respect to the memory of Hippocrates, who had been a doctor there.

SIR WILLIAM DUGDALE (1605–1686) produced one of the most valuable contributions to the knowledge of ecclesiastical antiquities—the English *Monasticon* (1665–1673). He also published *The Baronage of England* (1676), *The Antiquities of Warwickshire Illustrated* (1656), *A History of St. Paul's Cathedral* (1658), etc. It is impossible to do sufficient justice to Dugdale's astonishing learning, which justifies us in calling him the first of English antiquaries. His work, unlike that of so many of his contemporaries, can never go out of date, but must always remain a leading authority on its special subject. And, further, he is almost a solitary example of the scholar the extent of whose learning is fully represented by the quantity as well as the quality of his writing. "What Dugdale has done," says Anthony Wood, "is prodigious. His memory ought to be venerated and had in everlasting remembrance."

ANDREW FLETCHER (1655–1716) of Saltoun was a Scottish political writer of some note, who spent a very turbulent life, first, in opposing the Stewart government in Scotland, and, after his return from exile in 1688, in inveighing against union with England. His work consists of political tracts, and, in his *Second Discourse concerning the Affairs of Scotland* (1698), is to be found the extravagant, but, in those days, not altogether unreasonable proposal for reducing the wandering beggars or "gaberlunzies" to a state closely resembling slavery, with the extraordinary rider that the most hardened offenders should be sent to serve in the Venetian galleys against the Turk! His courageous projects were never adopted; and he lived to see, with mortification, the union against which he had so vehemently declaimed.

SIR MATTHEW HALE (1609–1676), Chief Justice of the King's Bench in the reign of Charles II, wrote several works, many, such as the *Contemplations Moral and Divine* (1700), being of a moral and religious character.

SIR GEORGE MACKENZIE (1636–1691), King's Advocate from 1677 to 1686, was hated by the Covenanters as the "bloodthirsty advocate." The reputation which he thus gained seems to have rested on no foundation, so far as his own character was concerned, beyond a certain heat and sternness of temper, and, in his early days at the bar (1661), he had pleaded the cause of Lord Argyll. He wrote both verse and prose. His prose style is a remarkable example of belated enthusiasm for the long period, which had, in his own day, given place to the short sentence; and, both in his early novel, *Aretina* (1661), and in his later essays, he imitates the great masters of Caroline prose with considerable success. He is buried in the Greyfriars' Churchyard at Edinburgh.

HENRY NEVILLE (1620–1694), the friend of Harrington, the author of the *Oceana*, was also a member of the republican party. His treatise, *Plato Redivivus, or a Dialogue concerning Government* (1681), shows, however, a political change, as, in a dialogue between a Venetian nobleman, an English doctor (supposed to be Harvey), and an English gentleman, it advocates the monarchical form of government.

THOMAS RYMER (1641–1713), historiographer from 1692 to his death, is principally known as the

compiler of the *Fœdera*. His importance as a writer consists, however, in a pair of essays in which he vehemently attacked the Elizabethan drama and advocated a return to the Greek model. The first of these appeared in 1678, the year after his own frigid tragedy, *Edgar*, and may therefore be considered as a piece of special pleading. The second diatribe, dealing with *Othello* and *Julius Cæsar*, appeared in 1692, fourteen years later than the first. The serious attention of his closing years was devoted to the *Fœdera* (1704–1713), one of the most important collections of state papers in existence. Fifteen volumes were issued during Rymer's lifetime, the remaining two (1715 and 1717) were edited by his assistant, Robert Sanderson.

BULSTRODE WHITELOCKE (1605–1675), an able lawyer and a prominent member of the Long Parliament, was entrusted with an embassy to Sweden, and with other high offices, by the Protector. He wrote *Memorials of English Affairs* from the beginning of the reign of Charles I to the Restoration (1682), which are familiar by name to all readers of Carlyle's *Cromwell*.

ANTHONY WOOD (1632–1695) of Merton College, Oxford, is well known as the historian (1674) of the city and University of Oxford, and as the author of *Athenæ Oxonienses* (1691–2), an account of the eminent men educated at Oxford. His extraordinary and admirable devotion to his University has done something, perhaps, to hinder his wider reputation as a writer of charming and quaint English prose; but all subsequent writers on Oxford owe almost everything to him, while his own life in Oxford was his ideal of happiness.

CHAPTER XV.

THE AGE OF ANNE.

I. POPE, SWIFT, AND THE AUGUSTAN POETS.

§ 1. POPE: his early life and poems. *The Rape of the Lock* and *Windsor Forest.* § 2. His translation of Homer. § 3. Publication of his complete poems. His life at Twickenham and his edition of Shakespeare. § 4. *The Dunciad*, the *Essay on Man*, etc. § 5. Criticism of *The Rape of the Lock.* Pope's death and character. § 6. SWIFT: his early life and connection with Sir William Temple. § 7. Settles in Ireland. *The Tale of a Tub.* § 8. Returns to England and joins the Tories. Made dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin. § 9. Takes up his residence finally in Ireland. The *Drapier's Letters. Gulliver's Travels.* His death. § 10. His relation to Stella and Vanessa. § 11. Criticism of *Gulliver's Travels.* § 12. Of *The Tale of a Tub* and other works. Comparison between Swift, Rabelais, and Voltaire. § 13. ARBUTHNOT. His *History of John Bull.* § 14. MATTHEW PRIOR. § 15. GAY: *The Beggar's Opera.* § 16. GARTH, PARNELL, and TICKELL. § 17. YOUNG: the *Night Thoughts.* § 18. ALLAN RAMSAY.

§ 1. THE literary period inaugurated by Dryden and the great wits of the Revolution reached its climax in the reign of Anne—the so-called Augustan age of English literature. The classical spirit ruled supreme in verse and prose alike, and produced a degree of polish in both, which, in inferior hands, became dangerously like a mere mechanical regularity. It was an age pre-eminently of literary cliques, of great patrons and clients of genius. Its whole tendency was unimaginative and matter-of-fact; its literature deals, not with ideas, but with men and things—and, above all, politics—and studies not so much what it says as the way to say it. This is the spirit which we have seen coming in like a flood with Dryden; and, as he dominated his own age, so the epoch in which his work was carried to perfection has its own laureate. Far above all other poets of this epoch shines the brilliant name of ALEXANDER POPE. His family was of the Roman communion; his father carried on a linen draper's business in Lombard Street, and there he was born on the 21st of May, 1688. About 1700 his father retired to a pleasant country-house at Binfield, between Windsor and Wokingham, so that, from his earliest years, Pope was familiar with the rural scenery of Windsor Forest. The boy's

ALEXANDER POPE (1688–1744). *Life.*

growth was retarded by a severe illness in childhood; he remained almost a dwarf, and so deformed that his after life was "one long disease," which not only precluded him from the possibility of embracing any active profession, but made constant care and nursing necessary to the preservation of his life. Like many other deformed persons, he had a face which was singularly intellectual and expressive, and his eyes were remarkable for their tenderness and fire. He was sent to school for a short time, but returned home when he was twelve. His intellect was extraordinarily precocious, and the literary ambition by which he was devored from his early boyhood at once pointed out his destined career. He said of himself, "I lisped in numbers, for the numbers came," and his earliest attempts at poetry were made when he had hardly left his nursery. His father was in easy circumstances; and thus the boy was able to indulge that taste for study and poetical reading which continued to be the passion of his life. He was so struck with reverence for Dryden's glory that, at the age of twelve, he is said to have persuaded a friend to accompany him to Will's Coffee-house, which the illustrious veteran frequented; and so obtained a glance at the patriarch of letters, whose mantle he himself was destined to wear. Dryden died in that very year, 1700; and Pope's first work belongs to 1702 or 1703, when, although only fifteen, he translated the first book of Statius' *Thebais*; and he composed a collection of *Pastorals*, if his own statement is to be trusted, in 1704. These *Pope's early poetry.* were not published till 1709, when they appeared in one of Tonson's Miscellanies, side by side with the *Pastorals* of Pope's future enemy, Ambrose Philips. To nearly the same time as the *Pastorals*, which are still imitations from Virgil, belong certain paraphrases of Chaucer, which prove how eager he was to follow the example of his great master, Dryden. In 1709, or about that time, he met Wycherley, and the famous but unequal friendship of the old and young poets began, with considerable heart-burnings on either side, and one serious breach, till Wycherley's death in 1715. Another early friend, to whom Pope was apparently introduced by Wycherley, was William Walsh, something of a poet himself and a considerable critic. His influence and advice appear to have had much to do with the formation of Pope's style. At any rate, he sent out a fine tribute of praise in the *Essay on Criticism*, *Pope's Essay on Criticism.* which, written in 1709 and published in 1711, was the first poem to fix Pope's reputation, and to give a foretaste of his immense popularity. It is generally [illegible] are prose translated by Horace, repeated by Boileau, and by all the poets and critics of the classical school, but they are expressed by Pope with such an ease of form and delicacy, such ripeness of judgment, such grace of movement and melody of verse, that the poem appears less the effort of a young writer than the result of consummate experience and practice.

in composition. This is closely followed by the first sketch of *The Rape of the Lock*, which appeared in two cantos in Lintot's Miscellany for 1712. The tiny mock-heroic poem was greeted by Addison as "*merum sal*," but Pope set himself to still further improvement of it, and the whole poem, as we have it, was published in 1714. This masterpiece, the successful rival of Boileau's *Lutrin*, which had been translated into English about this time by Nicholas Rowe, and incomparably superior to all other mock-heroic poems the world had hitherto seen, stamped Pope at once the chief poet of his age. *The Rape of the Lock* was his longest work between 1712 and 1715. In 1712 a number of *The Spectator* contained the famous pastoral, *The Messiah*, which was modelled on Virgil's fifth eclogue. In 1713 was published *Windsor Forest*, whose extraordinary neatness of versification and beauty of diction must be taken into account, if we compare it with the work of other and more natural poets. Pope, who, like Wycherley, had a suspicious fondness for referring to his own precocity, said that he had written *Windsor Forest* in 1704. The plan of the work is borrowed principally from Sir John Denham's *Cooper's Hill*, but Pope has hardly any passage to be compared with those few but unequalled lines which have preserved the vitality of Denham's poem. Pope's work was received, on the one hand, by hard criticism, notably from the pen of John Dennis; but, on the other, it provoked a somewhat undiscriminating praise. Certainly, few people would be found nowadays to congratulate the poet upon his *Temple of Fame*, which, resorting to his old fashion of imitation and paraphrase, he adapted from Chaucer's *House of Fame*.

"The Rape of the Lock" (1712–14).

"Windsor Forest" (1713).

§ 2. In 1715 the first volume of his translation of the *Iliad* appeared. This work, upon which Dryden had feared to venture, has its origin in 1709, when a detached episode appeared in Lintot's Miscellany, and was received so well that Pope determined to complete the undertaking. The work was to be published by subscription, and he was at first almost reduced to despair when brought face to face with so prodigious a task; but with practice came facility, and the whole of the *Iliad* was at last completed by the publication of the sixth volume in 1720. The whole work, as is well known, was dedicated to Congreve. It excited a frenzy of admiration, and various enthusiasts wrote laudatory epigrams which, by the extravagance of the honour paid to Pope, prove how little the authors understood of Homer. In a pecuniary sense this was a most successful venture. Pope received for his labour upwards of £5000, and laid the foundation of that competence which he enjoyed with sense and moderation. The *Odyssey* did not appear till five years later, in 1725; but of this Pope himself translated only twelve out of the twenty-four books;

Translation of Homer (1715–20).

Translation of the "Odyssey" (1725).

and employed, in 1723, for his assistance in the remaining half, the two respectable contemporary poets, ELIJAH FENTON (1683–1730) and WILLIAM BROOME (1689–1745), to whom he paid a generous share in the proceeds, not, however, without some show of ungratefulness on their part. The version of *The Battle of the Frogs and Mice*, which was published in the same volume, was by Parnell, and had appeared separately in 1717. Pope, in selecting a form for his version, took that rhymed decasyllabic verse of which he was so consummate a master. However beautiful this may be as a medium for appropriate subjects, it is quite unfitted, from the regularity of its pauses, the neatness of its structure, and the irresistible tendency to terminate the sense with the couplet, to reproduce in English the solemn, ever-varied, resonant swell of Homer's billow-like hexameter. Homer is stripped, so to speak, of his flowing chlamys and fillets, and set to masquerade in the stiff bounds of the high-heeled shoes, the laced velvet coat, and flowing periwig of the eighteenth century. Mechanically, indeed, Pope's translation is far from unfaithful; but, in its adaptation of the spirit and atmosphere of its original, it is not to be compared with Chapman's version. Bentley's criticism upon the work is, after all, the best and most comprehensive. "It is a pretty poem, Mr. Pope, but you must not call it Homer." Nevertheless, it is a noble monument of our national literature; and there must be many readers who have gained a considerable admiration for Homer through its means, although it may be possible to criticise such an admiration. It is unfortunate, perhaps, that in selecting the two great epic writers for translation, Dryden and Pope did not exchange parts. Dryden, although Virgilian himself rather than Homeric, and unequal to the task of reproducing Homer's freshness and grandeur, still possessed most of the Homeric quality of fire and animation; while Pope, with his prevailing merit of consummate grace and finish, would have reproduced, with as great success as Dryden, the unsurpassed dignity and chastened majesty of Virgil.

Metre and style of Pope's translations.

§ 3. In 1717 Pope published a volume of collected poems, containing, among others, the *Lines to an Unfortunate Lady*, the *Epistle from Sappho to Phaon*, borrowed from the *Heroides* of Ovid, and the *Epistle from Eloïsa to Abelard*, its subject taken, oddly enough, from the romantic story of medieval times. These works are artificial in their arrangement and diction alike; but the passion which they express is so intense, so vivid with beautiful and pathetic imagery, that they must be considered as masterpieces. The subject of the first is very obscure, and was for a long time supposed to deal with a real story of disappointed love and suicide. Although many passages in this elegy are of extraordinary beauty, *Eloïsa*, as a whole, is a finer and more sustained composition. There is a singular air of romance

Collection of miscellaneous poems (1717).

about it, in spite of the correct trimness of its couplets; the intense glow of unhappy passion lights up the gloom of Eloïsa's surroundings with a lurid and unnatural splendour. During this part of his life, Pope was living at Chiswick with his father and mother, to whom he always showed the most tender and dutiful affection; but his father died in 1717, and, two years after, Pope removed with his mother to a villa he had purchased at Twickenham. While this house was getting ready, he stayed for a little while at Stanton Harcourt in Oxfordshire, and finished the fifth book of his *Iliad*. Twickenham was his home for the rest of his life: here he lived in easy circumstances, amusing his leisure with gardening and with the grotto and quincunxes in which he delighted; associating with almost all the illustrious statesmen, orators, and men of letters of his day, Swift, Addison, Atterbury, Bolingbroke, Prior, Gay, and Arbuthnot. He was a little too fond of talking of his own independence, and alluding, with affected indifference, to the number of "titled" guests whom he received; and, like most men who live in a narrow clique, was very prone to treat all those who were outside the charmed bounds as wretches deserving only of contempt, and to behave as though all virtues, wit, and honour were confined to his own set. In 1725 he published an edition of Shakespeare in six volumes—a careless and ill-performed task, in which he exhibited a strange deficiency in the kind of knowledge indispensable to a commentator upon any old author. His work was generally condemned as inferior to Theobald's contemporary edition. Theobald, without any poetic genius, possessed more critical discernment, and produced a more valuable result. In 1726 he published a detailed criticism of Pope's Shakespeare. For this, Pope's jealous envy could never forgive him, and we shall see directly how savagely he revenged himself. Theobald's own edition of Shakespeare did not come out till 1733; but Pope was never without quarrels, and his residence at Twickenham is marked by a series of unworthy literary squabbles and disastrous Platonic friendships. Until the appearance of *The Dunciad*, he produced little that is noteworthy from a poetical point of view; and, apart from the *Odyssey*, his chief contribution to literature between 1717 and 1728 was the part which he took, with Swift, Arbuthnot, and others, in the *Miscellanies* (1727–8), and particularly in the *Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus*, an extensive satire on the abuse of learning and the extravagances of philosophy. Parts of this work belong to the volume of 1727; but it was not published in full till 1741. The intention of the partners was to write a kind of *Don Quixote* for the benefit of literature; but the idea was not very happy, although the wit of Arbuthnot saved the production from being totally unsuccessful.

Pope's life at Twickenham.

Pope's clique.

His edition of Shakespeare (1725).

Controversy with Theobald.

"Martinus Scriblerus" (1727).

Pope's admirable satiric genius entirely deserted him when he abandoned verse for prose, and his wit became mere personality and buffoonery. Perhaps, with the exception of Arbuthnot's *History of John Bull*, the prose portions of the *Miscellanies* are hardly worthy of their author's fame. Pope, however, supplied some brilliant satirical poetry to this compilation.

§ 4. The first edition of *The Dunciad* appeared in May, 1728; a second edition, which remained definitive for some years, belongs to March, 1729; a fourth book was added to the original three in 1742; and the whole satire was published, in its final form, in 1743. To chastise one's enemies, especially if they are weaker than oneself, is not a noble pastime; but Pope was constitutionally sensitive. His early success, his steady popularity, his malignant vanity, and, above all, the supercilious tone in which he thought fit to speak of the struggles of literary existence and its social inferiority, all conspired to raise round him a swarm of industrious enemies, animated alike by envy and revenge. Consequently, he determined to inflict upon them, under the mask of zeal for reason and good taste, a memorable castigation. *The Dunciad* is more remarkable for its spite than for its taste or reason; but this fault, which ought to have been its ruin, has procured, by a curious inversion of taste, its real and abiding fame. The primary idea of *The Dunciad* was doubtless suggested by Dryden's *Mac Flecknoe*, whose faults and merits it shares on a larger scale; but it is incomparably the fiercest, most sweeping, and most powerful of all literary satires. Most of the persons attacked are now so obscure that their names are rescued from oblivion only by their position in Pope's satire, where they lie like perishable rubbish preserved in the lava of a volcano; but, in the later part of the poem, and especially in the additional book, Pope has given a sketch of the gradual decline and corruption of taste and learning in Europe, which is one of the noblest outbursts of his genius. The plot of the poem—the Iliad, so to speak, of the dunces—is not very ingenious, and was borrowed from Dryden. The idea is that the throne of dulness is left vacant by the death of Laurence Eusden, and that the various aspirants to "that bad eminence" engage in a series of trials, like the Olympic games of old, to determine who shall inherit it. In the original poem, the palm was given to Theobald, whose strictures on Pope's Shakespeare had suggested, to a great extent, the completion of the satire. Theobald's own Shakespeare of 1733, undoubtedly better than Pope's, may have caused a subsequent change in the poem. At any rate, its modifications were innumerable. Finally, in the complete edition of 1743, which appeared in the year before Theobald's and Pope's own death, Theobald is degraded from the throne, and the crown is given to Colley Cibber, the famous actor, manager, and dramatic author, who had succeeded Eusden as Laureate in 1730. What-

"The Dunciad" (1728–43).

Its plot.

ever were Cibber's vices and frivolity, he was certainly in no sense an appropriate king of dunces; and in this, as in numberless other instances, Pope's bitterness ran away with his judgment. *The Dunciad* is a wonderful—almost a fearful—example of the highest genius applied to the most selfish ends—self-love chastising its victims with the lightning of genius, under the guise of punishing bad literature. At the same time, had the only object of the poem been to wreak a private revenge upon individuals, its perennial interest would have been non-existent. Its universal fame lies in its general application to dulness under all its shapes and forms.

Later poems (1731–5).

The publication of *The Dunciad* was followed by a series of poems, chiefly epistolary, which appeared, speaking roughly, between 1731 and 1735. These are the poems comprehended in the *Moral Essays*, the *Epistles*, and the *Imitations of Horace*—a poet whom Pope was very well calculated to imitate; for, in good sense, clearness, and that *curiosa felicitas* of diction which Petronius ascribed to Horace, it is difficult to judge between the two. Pope's tone, in all these compositions, is half satirical—the *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot* (1735) contains some of his most biting satire—half philosophical. In 1734, this philosophical tone is seen with undivided authority in the final edition of the *Essay on Man*, an ethical and metaphysical poem consisting of four epistles, and addressed to Bolingbroke. As a matter of fact, it is really a poetical version of a metaphysical system which Bolingbroke himself had planned. The originality, therefore, of the theory, is not remarkable, and its soundness is doubtful; the treatment is also somewhat diffuse and unwieldy; and, on the whole, as a contribution to the literature of philosophy, it is unimportant. On the other hand, no one can deny the exquisite neatness and conciseness of the verse, its unvarying melody, and the beauty and felicity of the illustrations; and the *Essay on Man* is an excellent example of the highest skill in the art of so treating an abstract and philosophical subject as to render it neither dry nor unpoetical. Briefly summarised, its construction is this. In the first epistle man is regarded in his relation to the universe; in the second, in his relation to himself; in the third, in his relation to society; and in the fourth, with respect to his idea of, and pursuit after, happiness.

"Essay on Man" (1734).

Pope's closing years.

The *Essay on Man* was Pope's last work of real importance. During the final years of his life he kept adding to his satires, completing the *Imitations of Horace*, for instance. His later satires display the same brilliancy as of old, but their tone, in its very brilliancy, becomes monotonous. In his *Ode on Saint Cecilia's Day*, he was bold enough to try his strength with Dryden, and was defeated, yet without disgrace. As his illustration of the power of music, he chose the story of Orpheus, and particularly his descent

into Hades for Eurydice. Pope also wrote a considerable number of epitaphs, some of which are remarkable instances of his consummate skill in the art of paying a compliment. Instances of this abound through all his work; and it may be said of him, as Macaulay gracefully said of Voltaire, that "no man ever paid compliments better than he." His sweetest confectionery had always a delicate, yet stimulating flavour, which was delightful to palates wearied by the coarse preparations of inferior artists. *The Rape of the Lock*, the *Epistles*, and even the *Satires*, abound in examples of the most artful and ingenious flattery, often veiled, with great subtlety, under an air of blame; one of the most perfect instances is in the closing lines of the epitaph upon young Harcourt.

Analysis of "The Rape of the Lock."

§ 5. The subject of Pope's most inimitable poem, *The Rape of the Lock*, was the cavalier frolic of Lord Petre, a man of fashion at the Court of Queen Anne, who cut a lock of hair from the head of a beautiful young maid of honour called Arabella Fermor. This incident was supplied to Pope by his friend John Caryll, and was treated by him with so much grace and delicate mock-heroic pleasantry, that, when he consulted Addison on the first sketch of the poem, the great critic strongly advised him to refrain from altering a "delicious little thing," which any change would be likely to spoil. Addison's counsel was as prudent as it was sincere; but Pope, fortunately for the further increase of his glory, followed his own judgment, and incorporated in the poem the supernatural agency of sylphs and gnomes—an idea which he borrowed from the fantastic theories of Paracelsus and the Rosicrucian philosophers. The action of these miniature spirits, in its exquisite proportion to the frivolous persons and events of the poem, is intended to fill the place of the classical deities who, from the time of Homer downwards, have favoured or opposed the heroes of epic poetry; and is managed with far more grace and originality than the hackneyed personifications of sloth and other qualities in Boileau's famous mock-heroic poem. *The Rape of the Lock* is briefly a dwarf epic in five books, and, to the lofty and serious works which it follows in miniature, is as a Dresden china figure to a Venus or an Apollo. It sparkles with the flash of diamonds and roguish glances; it is all a-flutter with hoop-petticoats; it has the trifling stateliness of stiff brocades and powdered wigs. Book I, beginning with a due invocation, describes the counsel given in a dream by Ariel to Belinda, and the lady's wonderful toilette. In Book II the "adventurous baron" offers a sacrifice in the hope of his design's success; Belinda goes upon the water, and there is a solemn council of the sylphs, in which their chief, Ariel, warns them of the impending danger. In Book III the courtly party arrives at Hampton Court. They all take coffee, and play a game of ombre, which is described with the minutest detail, and in the manner of a solemn tournament.

After this comes the tremendous catastrophe: the fatal scissors, furnished by a rival beauty, divide the fatal lock "from the fair head, for ever, and for ever!" Book IV transports us to the gloomy abode of spleen, and introduces us to the gnomes. Sir Plume, "with earnest eyes, and round unthinking face," is sent by Belinda to demand the restitution of the lock, which is refused. Book V describes a terrific combat in metaphor between the beaux and belles. Many of the gentlemen perish beneath the cruel glances of their fair opponents, when, in the midst of the carnage, the lock, the *causa teterrima belli*, is suddenly snatched into the skies, where it has ever since glittered as the constellation called the tress of Berenice.

The death of Pope's mother, the loss of many friends, among whom was Swift, now sinking into a state of hopeless idiocy, the increased complication of his own maladies, to which asthma and dropsy were now added—all these causes threw a gloom over his declining years, and hastened his approaching end. On the 30th of May, 1744, died this great poet, unquestionably the most illustrious writer of his age, hardly, if at all, inferior to Swift in the vigour, perfection, and originality of his genius. As a man, he was a strange mixture of selfishness and generosity, malignity and tolerance; he had a peculiar tendency which led him into indirect and cunning courses; and the intense literary ambition by which, like Voltaire, he was kept in an incessant fever, sometimes showed itself in personal, sometimes in literary meannesses and jealousies. But, as a writer, he is pre-eminent above all others of his time, and the age to which he belongs is rightly and justly the age of Pope.

His death and character.

§ 6. Certainly the most original genius and in many respects the greatest figure of this period was the great JONATHAN SWIFT, who, as a man of letters, yields the foremost place only to Pope, and, as a man of affairs, is second to none of his day. He was born in Dublin; but his father, who had been made, in 1666, steward of the King's Inns there, and died in the next year, just before his son was born, was of a Herefordshire family, while his mother came out of Leicestershire. His entrance into life was unfortunate, and tended to aggravate a natural tendency towards haughty misanthropy and bitter self-reliance. His father died in very embarrassed circumstances, and, from his earliest years, Swift was dependent upon the charity of his nearest relations. His nurse took him with her to Whitehaven, where three years of his infancy were spent; but, when he was six years old, he was sent to the College at Kilkenny; and, in 1682, he entered Trinity College, Dublin. His studies were, however, irregular and desultory; and, when he at last received his degree, it was with the unfavourable notice that it was conferred by special grace,

JONATHAN SWIFT (1667–1745).

Life.

indicating that his conduct had not satisfied those in authority. This was in 1686. In 1689, at his wits' end for something to do, he was taken in by Sir William Temple, a distant connection of his mother. The cautious and sybaritic old diplomatist was living in luxurious retirement at his beautiful villa of Moor Park in Surrey, amusing himself with gardening and the dilettante pursuit of literature. Swift remained in Temple's service as a sort of humble hanger-on, secretary, and literary subordinate; and there is no doubt that he deeply felt the miseries of dependence, which must have rankled in the memory of so proud and ambitious a man. Temple was frequently visited and consulted by King William, who is said to have noticed Swift and to have promised him a commission in a troop of horse; but, in the end, Swift obtained nothing from the acquaintance but a lesson in the Dutch way of cutting and eating asparagus. Swift's residence at Moor Park continued till Temple's death in 1699, with one or two intervals, one of which was caused by the mysterious illness that disturbed Swift all through his life. He took his Master's degree at Oxford in 1692. In 1694 he left Temple for a short time, took Orders in the Irish Established Church, and received the prebend of Kilroot in County Antrim. This absence was caused by his continual discontent with his patron, whose easy and supercilious condescension and oracular opinions on literary topics he could not endure. However, his Irish living was too small for comfort: he was obliged to swallow his humiliation and beg pardon in terms which show how he chafed against the yoke of dependence, and explain his mingled shame and anger in after-life, when he recalled his connection with his patron. During this period of his life he was industriously employed in study; and steady and extensive reading completed the defects of his earlier education. His acquaintance with history, poetry, and science was considerable; and he possessed in the highest degree the power of rendering the stores of knowledge he possessed available for a specific purpose. On Temple's death he became his literary executor, and prepared for the press the numerous works which his patron had left behind, presenting them, with a preface and dedication written by himself, to William III.

His residence at Moor Park.

His ordination and life in Ireland.

His return to Temple's household.

§ 7. Having failed, however, to obtain any preferment from William, whose sympathy with letters was never very evident, Swift, in 1699, went to Ireland as chaplain to the Lord-Lieutenant, the Earl of Berkeley. In 1700 he was presented to the three small livings of Laracor, Agher, and Rathbeggan, near Trim in County Meath, with an income altogether amounting to about £200 a year. He lived at Laracor till 1710, amusing himself with gardening, repairing his church and parsonage, and making

Swift's return to Ireland.

yearly visits to England, where the brilliancy of his conversation, his vigorous aptitude for affairs, and his connection with Temple, made his favour with the leading Whig statesmen, who were the ministers of the day. He became the familiar companion of the most illustrious men of the time, Halifax, Godolphin, Somers, as well as Addison, equally famous in letters and politics. Congreve had been his schoolfellow at Kilkenny, and Dryden, who died in 1700, was distantly related to his family. Swift perseveringly underrated Dryden in after-life, probably because the great poet, about 1692, had seen Swift's heavy Pindaric *Ode to the Athenian Society*, and had criticised it with the words, "Cousin Swift, you will never be a poet!" It was natural that Swift, the *protégé* of Temple, should enter public life under the Whig banner, especially when the Whig cause happened to predominate. But between 1700 and 1710 a coldness sprang up between the party and its brilliant defender. The Whigs promised him preferment, which never came; more than this, his ecclesiastical opinions were totally at variance with theirs. Throughout his life he was a staunch High Churchman—as the term was understood then—supporting the Establishment, and upholding the laws which excluded Nonconformists from power; while the Whigs, at this period, were engaged in agitating for a repeal of the Test Acts.

His connection with the Whig party.

The publication of Temple's letters, in 1700, was his earliest piece of published work; but his first important original essay was contained in his anonymous volume of 1704, which included *The Battle of the Books* and *The Tale of a Tub*. *The Tale of a Tub* was unquestionably his own production, although never formally owned by him. It was a savage, and yet exquisitely humorous pasquinade, designed to ridicule Romanists and Presbyterians, and to exalt the high Anglican party; the three rivals being impersonated in the ludicrous, and not very decorous adventures of his three heroes, Peter, Jack, and Martin. Swift asserted that he had written the book as early as 1696 or 1697; and there is no question that, at whatever date *The Tale of a Tub* was written, *The Battle of the Books* was certainly composed and ready for publication before the end of 1698, and was intended to support Sir William Temple in the by-plot arising out of Boyle and Bentley's celebrated controversy on the letters of Phalaris. The dispute, arising from a mere personal squabble with Bentley, who had been accused, although unjustly, of acting discourteously in his capacity of royal librarian, soon embraced the question, then so violently contested, of the relative superiority of the ancients and moderns. This was a dispute which had involved almost all the nations of the Continent; and Temple, with a lamentable deficiency of knowledge and commonsense, had taken the side of the ancients. Swift became the

Early works: "The Tale of a Tub" (1704).

"The Battle of the Books" (1704).

champion of the same side, and, in *The Battle of the Books*, gave a striking foretaste of the tremendous powers of sarcasm and vituperation which made him the most formidable of all pamphleteers in history. He does not attempt to touch the merits of the case; but, with the wildest and most grotesque oddity of invention, and the unscrupulous use of everything coarse, familiar, and ludicrous in language, he strives to cover his opponents with ignominy and contempt. The plan of the pamphlet is in no respect original; it describes a general engagement between the ancients and the moderns, in a sort of parody of the Homeric battles; but the boldness and fertility of abuse marks the appearance of a master of the whole vocabulary of insult.

In 1704 Archbishop King, Primate of Ireland, employed Swift to negotiate, in the name of the Irish clergy, with the English government. The Government laid a claim to all first-fruits and tenths which were paid on an institution to any benefice; and his mission was taken with the purpose of inducing them to abandon this. He conducted his case with great ability and intelligence, but did not obtain the result he desired. He had now rendered himself a prominent person both in the Church and in the general world of politics; he was known and feared as a powerful and unscrupulous pamphleteer, and as the familiar associate of those who were at the head of affairs; but his hopes of preferment were not fulfilled. At this time he regarded Ireland with a mixture of contempt and detestation, and was eager for any advancement that would enable him to reside in England, the centre and focus of political and literary activity. For the reason already mentioned he now broke off his connection with the Whigs, and began to write, to intrigue, and to satirise, with even greater force, vehemence, and success, on behalf of the Tory party.

Swift's mission to London (1704-9).

§ 8. Harley, afterwards Earl of Oxford, and St. John, better known as the brilliant but unprincipled Bolingbroke, had just displaced the Whig ministry when Swift came to England on a second first-fruits expedition (1710). They naturally received Swift, whose genius for political writing they well knew, with open arms. As a deserter from the enemy's camp he brought with him, not only the zeal of the apostate, but a damaging knowledge of the adversary's intimate tactics; and he was not a man who had many scruples in using any advantage he might possess. He became indispensable to his party; he was caressed and flattered by politicians and by society at large. He affected to treat men of the highest rank with the freedom and familiarity of an equal, and sometimes with the condescension of a superior; and his airs, which were not altogether so vulgar as those of the ordinary parvenu, were forgiven him in consideration of his genius and the services of his terrible pen.

His alliance with the Tory party (1710).

His negotiation about first-fruits and tithes was successfully terminated; and, this done, he poured forth, with unexampled rapidity, squib after squib, and pamphlet after pamphlet, employing all the stores of his unrivalled fancy and powerful sophistry to defend his party and to blacken and ridicule his adversaries. The great object of his ambition was an English bishopric; and the ministry would have been willing enough to gratify him, had he not encountered all that hostility which a man of his stamp cannot fail to arouse. Sharp, Archbishop of York, represented to the Queen that high preferment could not be given with propriety to a man whose writings—*The Tale of a Tub*, for instance—verged upon the very brink of profanity and indecency; but a still more fatal enemy may have been Anne's favourite, the Duchess of Somerset, whom Swift had lampooned in verses that even the meekest of her sex could not forgive. His hope of the see of Hereford proved vain: the ministers, in spite of the strongest desire to do more for their supporter, were obliged to confine his recompense to the deanery of Saint Patrick's, Dublin, to which he was nominated, to his extreme disappointment, in April, 1713. He was soon recalled from Ireland, where he had gone for the purpose of his installation, by the news of an irremediable breach between Bolingbroke and Harley. He vainly tried to reconcile the statesmen, upon whose union depended the whole stability of the Government; he found Harley pompous, timid, and reserved, and St. John volatile and insolent. After intense but fruitless efforts to heal their dissension he again retired. This took place in 1714. Bolingbroke, combining with Lady Masham, the Queen's favourite, who, rising from a humble and almost menial position, had gradually succeeded in ousting the Duchess of Marlborough from the royal favour, contrived to turn out Harley. Anne abandoned her minister on the pretext of his having appeared before her flushed with wine. But St. John's triumph was short: the death of Anne and the accession of the Elector of Hanover recalled the Whigs to power: the ministry were accused, not without strong grounds of probability, of a plot for bringing back the Pretender, and thus nullifying the Protestant succession. Harley was committed to the Tower: Bolingbroke fled beyond the seas, and soon made his appearance at the exiled Court of St. Germain's. Swift returned to Ireland, where he was received with universal contempt and execration.

Appointment to the deanery of St. Patrick's (1713).

Dissensions in the Tory party.

§ 9. During his long and repeated visits to England, Swift's company and conversation had always been sought after by men of letters as well as statesmen. He founded, together with Harley and other friends, a sort of club, called the Society of Brothers, in which some of his most amusing political squibs were concocted;

Swift's literary friendships.

and with Pope, Gay, and Arbuthnot he formed the so-called Scriblerus club, whose members were united by the closest intimacy and threw into a common stock their ideas embodied in the famous *Miscellanies*. From 1714 to 1721 Swift resided constantly in Ireland, and, from being an object of detestation, raised himself to a height of popularity which has never been surpassed even in the stormy political atmosphere of that turbulent country. The condition of Ireland, in those days a cancer and disgrace to Great Britain, was then unusually deplorable. The population was torn by bitter rivalry and mutual persecution between the dominating Protestant faction and the enslaved and impoverished Romanists; while the national evil of absenteeism had reduced the agricultural classes to the lowest abyss of misery and degradation. In some degree, perhaps, from motives of philanthropy, but far more probably out of his desire to embarrass and annoy the English government, Swift boldly proclaimed the misery of the country, and, by the force and bitterness of his pamphlets, soon drew down the persecution of the ministry. His *Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufactures* (1720) was followed by a state prosecution against the printer, which the Government, by desperate and unavailing efforts, by suborning judges and packing juries, strove to carry to a conviction. But the highest point of Swift's Irish popularity was attained by the seven famous letters which, in 1724, he inserted in a Dublin newspaper under the signature of *M. B. Drapier* (draper). Walpole and his ministry were attempting to force upon Ireland the circulation of a large sum of copper money, the contract for coining which had been undertaken, in 1722, by William Wood, a Birmingham speculator. To the war which was imminent on this point between the English and Irish Houses of Parliament, Swift added fresh fuel; he endeavoured, in his character of a Dublin draper, to persuade the people that "Wood's halfpence" were enormously below their nominal value, and counselled all true patriots not only to refuse to take them, but to refrain from using all English manufactures whatever. The force and animation of his arguments, and the exquisite skill with which he wore his mask of a plain, honest, patriotic tradesman, excited the impressionable Irish to a frenzy. As Swift afterwards boasted to Archbishop Boulter, he would have had but to lift his finger to cause the ministry to be torn to pieces. The project of accepting Wood's tender was renounced, and the Attorney-General's indictment of the printer of the letters, although maintained by all the violence of Whitsted, the Chief Justice, was ignored by the whole jury. Swift was known to be the real author of the letters, and his defence of the rights of the Irish people made him from this moment the idol of that warm-hearted race.

His life as dean.

His works on behalf of Ireland.

The "Drapier's Letters" (1724).

From 1724 to 1727 Swift was occupied with an infinity of pamphlets and occasional compositions, and with his greatest and most immortal work, the *Travels of Lemuel Gulliver*. He visited England in 1726, and, while he was there, *Gulliver* was published. This visit excited universal delight and admiration. But Esther Johnson, one of the few beings whom Swift ever really loved, died early in 1728, and the loss of many friends contributed still further to darken and intensify the gloom of his proud and sombre spirit. From 1689, when he had eaten too many golden pippins from his patron's garden, he had suffered more or less constantly from giddiness and pain in the head; and the fearful anticipations of insanity which had continually haunted him were destined to be cruelly verified. In 1741 he was afflicted by a painful inflammation which necessitated restraint; and he was gradually reduced to a state bordering upon idiocy, which lasted till his death on October 19, 1745. During the last two or three years of this period it is said that he never spoke, but showed an almost complete unconsciousness. There is no more melancholy spectacle than that of his shattered and lonely old age, without a family, or any to care for him save mercenary servants. He is buried in his own cathedral of St. Patrick, side by side with Stella, and on a tablet in the south wall is inscribed the epitaph which he composed for himself, one of the most tragic and terrible of human compositions, "Ubi saeva indignatio ulterius cor lacerare nequit." The words throw a fearfully vivid light upon his own character.

Publication of "Gulliver's Travels" (1726).

Failure of Swift's health: his death.

§ 10. Any account of Swift would be imperfect without some mention of the extraordinary events connected with his relations towards the two unhappy women whose love for him was the glory and misery of their lives. While residing in Temple's family he became acquainted with Esther Johnson, a beautiful young girl, whose widowed mother had been a companion to Sir William's sister, Lady Giffard. She was brought up in the house, and, when Swift came to Moor Park, she was barely eight years old. He became her tutor. The bond between master and pupil ripened, upon Esther's part, into the deepest and tenderest passion, and, upon the part of Swift, into as much attachment as consisted with his proud and bitter nature. On his removal to Ireland, Swift induced Stella—such was the poetical name he gave her—to settle in the country with her friend Mrs. Dingley; and maintained with both of them—although Mrs. Dingley was merely a mask to save appearances—that long, curious, and intimate correspondence which has since been published as his *Journal to Stella*. This *mémoire intime*, although the period of time which it covers is very short, is one of the most extraordinary things in literature. Swift's haughty spirit unbends; he addresses his

Swift's love affairs: Esther Johnson ("Stella").

The "Journal to Stella."

correspondent in the fond puerilities of the infantile jargon he called his "little language"; and, at the same time, while giving the most minute account of his thoughts and doings from day to day, interests us with a thousand details concerning the political and literary life of his time. The journal is full of the most affectionate aspirations after a tranquil life with his little M.D.—as, in his playful cipher, he called Stella. But all the while this extraordinary man, so ill-suited for love affairs, was playing a double game. On one of his visits to London, Swift became intimate with the family of a rich merchant named Vanhomrigh, over whose daughter Esther or Hester—the Vanessa of his writings—he exercised involuntarily that enchantment that he had cast over Stella. At first he directed her studies, and, in doing so, inspired an ardent, beautiful, and accomplished girl with a passion so deep and intense that, casting aside all female delicacy, she threw herself at Swift's feet and declared her unconquerable love for him. It is at this point that Swift's conduct cannot be justified. He ought now to have made her his wife, or to have broken off the connection. He did neither, but continued to describe, if not his love, at least the depth and sincerity of the friendship which he felt for her. To add to his embarrassments, Vanessa, who possessed an independent fortune, insisted, on the death of her father, on coming to Ireland; and, in spite of Swift's remonstrances, settled near Celbridge. Here, however, he continued to visit her. Vanessa, it is said, unable to learn the truth of Swift's relation to Stella, and driven almost to madness by suspense and irritation, wrote to Stella to enquire into the nature of her position with regard to him. The letter was intercepted by Swift, who brought it back, and, with a terrible countenance, and without saying a word, flung it down before the unhappy writer. Vanessa died in the same year, 1723, ostensibly of a broken heart. In judging Swift's conduct to Vanessa, much depends upon the question whether Swift was ever married to Stella. If he was, nothing could justify his treatment of Hester Vanhomrigh. But, although the fact of the marriage has been asserted by Sir Walter Scott, Macaulay, and others, the evidence for it breaks down upon examination, and many recent writers have given good reason for believing that it never took place. Stella died in 1728; and in the notices which Swift, smarting under the recent agony of her loss, wrote of her, it is impossible not to see a love as intense as its manifestation had been singular and inexplicable.

Hester Vanhomrigh ("Vanessa").

§ 11. The greatest and most characteristic of Swift's prose works is *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), a vast and all-embracing satire upon humanity itself, although many of the strokes were at the time intended to allude to particular persons and contemporary events. The general plan of the book is the following. It is written in the character of a plain, honest, unaffected

Analysis and characteristics of "Gulliver's Travels."

ship's surgeon, who describes the strange scenes and adventures of his voyages with the air of simple, straightforward, prosaic good faith that gives so much charm to the narratives of our brave old navigators. The contrast between the extravagance of the inventions and the gravity with which they are related, forms precisely the point of Swift's peculiar humour, and is equally perceptible in his other works. It was also the distinguishing feature of that singular saturnine kind of pleasantry which made his conversation so desired. He is said never to have been known to laugh, but to have poured forth the quaintest and most fantastic inventions with an air of gravity and sternness that kept his audience in convulsions of merriment. Gulliver is supposed to go for four voyages, each of which forms a division of the book. In the first, he visits the country of Lilliput, where the inhabitants are about six inches in stature, and all the objects, houses, trees, ships, and animals are in exact proportion to the miniature human beings. Indeed, one of the principal secrets of Swift's humour, as well as of the power which he possesses over the imagination—one is inclined to say the belief—of the reader, is the exquisite and watchful manner in which these proportions are preserved. In this respect the author never forgets himself; he even manages to give to the passions, the ambition, the ceremonies, and the religion of his diminutive people an air of the same littleness that invests the physical objects. The invention displayed in the droll and surprising incidents is as unbounded as the natural and *bonâ fide* air with which they are recounted; and we can hardly wonder at the exclamation of the learned bishop, who is said to have cried out "that there were *some* things in Gulliver that he could *not* quite believe!" The second voyage is to Brobdingnag, a country of enormous giants, each about sixty feet in height; and to these Gulliver plays the very part that the insect-like Lilliputians had played to him. As in the first voyage, the contemptible and ludicrous side of human things is shown by exhibiting them in almost microscopic proportions; so, in Brobdingnag, we are made to perceive how odious and ridiculous our politics, our wars, and our ambitions would appear to the gigantic perceptions of a more mighty race. The lesson is the same, but we learn it by looking through the other end of the telescope. The third part, which, from the want of unity in the objects represented, is generally found inferior to the preceding voyages, carries Gulliver to a series of strange and fantastic countries. First there is Laputa, a flying island, inhabited by philosophers and astronomers. Swift's intention was to satirise the follies and abuses of learning and science; but, independently of the fact that much of this part—*e.g.* the Academy of Lagado—is borrowed from Lucian, Rabelais, and other satirists, his shafts of ridicule are not always very well directed, and fall pointless, being levelled against

Lilliput.

Swift's precise imagination.

Brobdingnag.

Laputa, etc.

imaginary follies. From Lagado the traveller goes to Glubdubbrib and then to Luggnagg, in the second of which countries he gives us the terrible description of the Struldbrugs, wretches cursed with bodily immortality without preserving at the same time their intellects or their affections.

Gulliver's last voyage is to the country of the Houyhnhnms, a region in which horses are the reasoning, civilised, and dominant beings; while men, under the name of Yahoos, are degraded to the rank of noxious, filthy, and unreasoning brutes. The manner in which Swift has described these, retaining, in their propensities, a resemblance to man which only renders them more horrible and loathsome, shows how intense was his hatred and scorn of humanity. The satire goes on deepening as it advances; playful and amusing in the scenes of Lilliput, it grows blacker and bitterer at every step, until in the Yahoos it reaches a pitch of almost insane ferocity, which, there is but too much reason to believe, was a faithful embodiment of Swift's opinion of his fellow-creatures.

The Houyhnhnms and Yahoos.

§ 12. A very wild and farcical extravagance of incident surrounds the three brothers, Peter, Jack, and Martin, in *The Tale of a Tub*, whose squabbles are a figure of the Reformation and its consequences. Between the chapters of narrative Swift interposed what he called digressions, the embodiment of the most ludicrous fancies in a degree of out-of-the-way learning not to be met with in his other works. Everything droll and familiar in thought and language is concentrated in this extraordinary production. The innumerable pamphlets and political tracts which came in so rapid a succession from his pen, such as his *Contests and Dissensions in Athens and Rome* (1701) and his *Conduct of the Allies* (1711), or his *Letter on the Sacramental Test* (1708), are now very seldom consulted; but they all exhibit the vigour of his reasoning, the admirable force and directness of his style, and his unscrupulous ferocity of invective. They are all, whatever their subject, party pamphlets of the most virulent kind, in which the author was never restrained by any feeling for his own dignity, or of candour and indulgence for others, from overwhelming his opponents with ridicule and abuse. Like the Indian savage torturing his victim at the stake, he cares little how he may burn and wound himself, so long as he can make his victim writhe. Again, he is quite indifferent to the fact that the filth which he hurls at his opponents sticks to his own fingers. The bitterness, as well as the power, of these writings is often something almost diabolical. His *Character of Thomas, Earl of Wharton* (1710) is one of the most virulent personal attacks in English. Perhaps the most unpleasant form of his satire is found in his purely ironical tracts, the *Polite Conversation*, published 1738, and the *Rules for Servants* which

"The Tale of a Tub."

Party pamphlets.

Ironical pamphlets.

came out posthumously. In the first, he collected into a species of comic manual all the vulgar repartees, nauseous jokes, and "selling of bargains," that were at that time common in smart society; in the second, beneath the ironical guise of precepts, he shows how minute and penetrating his observation had been of the lying, pilfering, and dirty practices of servants. The most innocent and most pleasant of his humorous works in prose are the papers written in the character of Isaac Bickerstaff (1708–9), in which he tormented the astrologer Partridge with a succession of practical jokes, bearing evidence, on their face, of an exquisite seriousness. He left numerous letters behind: those addressed to his intimate friends, Pope and Gay, and those written to Sheridan, half friend and half butt, contain inimitable specimens of that peculiar humour which Coleridge happily characterised as "anima Rabelaisii habitans in sicco." The three greatest satirical wits of modern times possess each his individual manner. Rabelais, with his almost frantic animal spirits, pours forth an astonishing mixture of erudition and ingenious buffoonery; Voltaire, with a sly grin of contempt, makes everything he attacks appear despicable as well as odious; but Swift inspires us at once with loathing and contempt. We laugh with Rabelais and sneer with Voltaire, with Swift we despise and abhor. As a poet, Swift is more remarkable for his matter than his manner. His poems form, in their style and manner, a strong contrast to the type so prevalent at the time, whose most complete representative was Pope. They have no pretension to loftiness of language, but are written in the *sermo pedestris*, in a tone studiously preserving the familiar expression of common life, and not infrequently allied to doggerel. In nearly all of them Swift adopted the short octosyllabic verse which Prior and Gay had rendered popular. The poems, like the prose writings, show a wonderful acquaintance with ordinary incidents, an intense observation of human nature, and a profoundly misanthropic view of mankind. The longest of the narrative poems, and, at the same time, one of the least interesting, is *Cadenus and Vanessa* (1733), an account of the episode which terminated so fatally for Hester Vanhomrigh. Cadenus is an obvious anagram upon Decanus, the dean. The less important, but more popular verses, *On the Death of Dr. Swift* (1731), describing the mode in which that event, and the dean's own character, would be discussed among his friends, enemies and acquaintances, provide an almost unsurpassed picture, at once satirical and true, of the language and sentiments of ordinary society. He produced an infinite number of small burlesques and pleasantries in prose and verse, as, for example, *The Grand Question Debated*, in which, with consummate skill and humour, he adopted the

The "Bickerstaff" papers.

Swift's letters.

Comparison with Rabelais and Voltaire.

Swift's poems.

maundering style of a vulgar servant-maid. Not even Shakespeare, in his Mrs. Quickly, and the nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*, has more accurately seized the peculiarities of the lower classes. One might cite a thousand parodies, jests, punning Latin and English letters, epigrams, and descriptions. Many of them are fanciful trifles, but they are executed with the greatest perfection; and in some, as *The Legion Club*, or the verses on Bettesworth and Lord Cutts, the ferocious satire of Swift is seen in its fullest intensity: they are sparkling bubbles blown from vitriolic acid.

§ 13. The society of which Pope and Swift were the chief glory was certainly relieved of some of its harshness and bitterness of temper by the genial JOHN ARBUTHNOT. He was born at Arbuthnot in Kincardineshire, where his father was an Episcopal clergyman, and was educated at Aberdeen. He took his degree of doctor of medicine from St. Andrews, and, settling as a physician in London, remained attached to the Court from 1705 to the death of Queen Anne, when his Tory and Jacobite leanings brought about his retirement. He was a lovable and amiable person, as well as one of the most accomplished wits of his day, and was a chief contributor to those *Miscellanies* (1727–8) of which we have already spoken more than once in connection with Pope and Swift. He is supposed to have formulated the original plan of the satire on the abuse of learning known as the *Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus* (1741). Certainly the best portions of the work are in all probability his; as, for example, the description of the pedantic education which the learned Cornelius gave his son. Arbuthnot's extraordinarily facile assumption of Swift's style has been the cause of a slight depreciation of his fame; and his splendid prose satire, *Law is a Bottomless Pit* (1712), better known as *The History of John Bull*, is usually found incorporated in editions of Swift's works. This was a caricature of the political intrigues which led to the War of the Succession in Spain, and its object was to make Marlborough's prosecution of the war unpopular with the nation. Each European Power is personified by an appropriate name, and the adventures of Squire South (Austria), Lewis Baboon (France), Nick Frog (Holland), and Lord Strutt (Spain), are related with an odd humour and familiar vulgarity of language which, at the same time, go to form one of the most pleasant things in eighteenth-century literature. There is much of the same humour that we find in *Gulliver* and *The Tale of a Tub*; but Arbuthnot is always good-natured, and there is no trace of the fierce bitterness and misanthropy that tinges every page of Swift. In the second and inferior half of this ingenious pamphlet Arbuthnot goes into humorous detail as to the political intrigues of the English ministry, and, in particular, as to the way in which the Earl of Nottingham tricked the Scottish Presbyterians into assenting to

JOHN ARBUTHNOT (1667–1735).

"*History of John Bull*" (1712).

the Bill against occasional conformity. The characters of the various nations and parties are conceived and maintained with consummate spirit; and perhaps the popular idea of John Bull, with which Englishmen are so fond of identifying their personal and national peculiarities, was first stamped and fixed by Arbuthnot's amusing burlesque. In the same year (1712) he brought out another Swiftian *jeu d'esprit*, *The Art of Political Lying*; but it will be easily understood that his individual work, often produced in such close collaboration with others, is hard to separate from its surroundings, so eloquent of Pope and Swift. He was also the author of many learned tracts, both in general literature and upon subjects more immediately connected with his calling. The *Essay on the Usefulness of Mathematical Learning* (1700) and the treatise on *Ancient Coins*, the definitive edition of which belongs to 1727, attest his wide interest in various subjects. He seems to have deserved all the admiration lavished on him by all his friends as an accomplished scholar, an able and benevolent physician, and a wit of singular and brilliant fertility. Two volumes of *Miscellanies*, attributed to him, were collected and published in 1751.

Arbuthnot's miscellaneous works.

§ 14. MATTHEW PRIOR was at once a poet and diplomatist, prominent on the stage of politics as on that of literature. He was of humble origin, and, like Ben Jonson, after passing a short time at Westminster School, was compelled to devote himself to a mean occupation. He passed some time with an uncle who kept a tavern in London, and was employed in keeping his accounts. His scholarship, however, is said to have attracted the notice of the generous Dorset, who enabled him to complete his studies at Westminster and St. John's College, Cambridge. He distinguished himself there, and obtained a fellowship. Early in his life he took part with Montagu, another of his patrons, in writing *The Town and Country Mouse*, which was intended to ridicule Dryden's *Hind and Panther*. The door of public employment was soon open to him. His career in the diplomatic service was brilliant. At first he accompanied Lord Dursley as secretary to the embassy at the Hague; in 1697 he became secretary of legation at the Peace of Ryswick, and received a considerable pecuniary gratification from the Government. He twice went to Paris as secretary to the embassy, and, by his talents in negotiation, as well as by his wit and accomplishments in society, appears to have been very popular among the French. Many stories are related of his address in polished repartee, in which he showed himself in no way inferior to the Parisian wits and men of letters. On returning to England he was made a commissioner of trade, and entered Parliament in 1701. He was at first a partisan of the Whigs; but, on the impeachment of Lord Somers, deserted them for the

MATTHEW PRIOR (1664–1721).

His diplomatic career.

Tories. During the negotiations by which Bolingbroke acceded to the Peace of Utrecht, he was plenipotentiary at Paris, living in great splendour. His portrait at Cambridge shows how finely the robes of an ambassador became his stately figure. But, in 1715, when the Tories had fallen, Prior was ordered into custody by the Whigs on the charge of high treason, and remained for two years in confinement. The worst result of this political persecution to him was the loss of all his fortune, his means being now nearly reduced to the small revenue of his college fellowship, which in the days of his splendour he had prudently refused to give up, calculating that the time might come when he would be glad to possess even so small an income. However, with the assistance of his friends, he published by subscription a collection of his works (1718), the proceeds of which amounted to a considerable sum. A previous edition had been published in 1709. Prior was an Epicurean philosopher of the stamp of Horace, and accommodated himself easily to every change of fortune. He bought an estate in Essex with a present of £4000, which was given him by Lord Harley, and lived there for the last two or three years of his life, dying at Wimpole, while on a visit to his patron. His longer and more ambitious poems are *Alma*, a metaphysical discussion carried on in easy, unembarrassed Hudibrastic verse, and exhibiting a good deal of thought and learning beneath its trifling and conversational garb; and the epic entitled *Solomon*, a poem somewhat in the manner, and with the very defects of Cowley's *Davideïs*. A work of considerable length, and of an aspiring character, is the dialogue entitled *Henry and Emma*, modernised from the old ballad of the *Nut-Brown Maid*. Prior was only following the example of Dryden and Pope in their adaptations from Chaucer and Boccaccio, but he spoiled his original more successfully than even they had done. The simple passion and picturesque sentiment of the early bards did not readily fit itself to the style of the correct poets. Prior has two claims to fame in verse. His animated, half-tender, half-sensual love-songs are the perfection of neatness; their union of natural, if not profound, sentiment with the poet's philosophic gaiety and carelessness, gives them all the peculiar charm of the French *chanson*. They have all its fragility and its power of combining grave things with gay under a form of verse which is, in itself, the essence of levity. Prior, in the second place, composed a number of tales in verse, in imitation of the *Contes* of La Fontaine. As a writer of epigram he holds a place in the first rank of poets.

His fall.

Prior's poetry.

Its merits.

§ 15. The name of JOHN GAY belongs to the society of Pope, Swift, and Arbuthnot more intimately than the name of Prior. He was one of those amiable, good-natured men who are the darlings of their friends, and, by their talents, excite admiration without jealousy

JOHN GAY (1685–1732).

—by their personal character, fondness rather than respect. Gay was, however, a lazy creature, and, when he died of an inflammatory fever in 1732, the sorrow of Pope and the tears of Swift were probably more than he deserved. He was the son of a townsman of Barnstaple, and, having no prospects in life, filled for some time the occupation of a linen-draper's shopman. However, he took to an unhappy dependence upon powerful friends, which destroyed his self-respect, and to vainly pining after public employment and Court favour, for which his indolent and self-indulgent habits rendered him singularly unfit. His earliest important poem is *The Shepherd's Week* (1714), which he published under the auspices of Pope, as a burlesque upon the pastorals of Ambrose Philips. The charming and well-executed poem, in a mock-didactic vein, called *Trivia, or the Art of Walking the Streets of London*, followed in 1716. *The Shepherd's Week*, consisting of seven pastorals, is, in spite of its intention as a parody, so fresh and pleasant, while its descriptions of country life are so agreeable, that it will always be read with pleasure for its intrinsic merits. Like Spenser before him, Gay made his personages and his landscape English; but, of course, all the incidents and the general tone of the dialogue are comic. He shows great address in applying the topics treated by Theocritus and Virgil to the customs, employments, and superstitions of English peasants, and endeavours to heighten his effect by using, here and there, antiquated and provincial expressions.

"The Shepherd's Week" (1714).

Trivia, in its turn, is interesting, not only for its ease and quiet humour, but for the curious details which it gives us of the street scenery, costumes, and manners of the time. Gay's real talent, however, lay in writing dramatic pieces of a comic order, with songs as *intermezzi*, resembling in their form those "operas" with which Sir William D'Avenant and Dryden had paved the way for Restoration drama. They contained, or were supposed to contain, political allusions whose piquancy greatly contributed to their popularity. They are also seldom free from a somewhat loose and immoral tendency. *The What d'ye Call It?* (1715) is a kind of half-pastoral extravaganza, while the farce of *Three Hours after Marriage* (1717) is very interesting from the fact that Gay was joined in its composition by Pope and Arbuthnot, and from no other reason. His most successful venture was *The Beggar's Opera* (1728), the idea of which was first suggested by Swift in a letter to Pope. "I believe," he wrote, "that the pastoral ridicule is not exhausted, and that a porter, footman, or chairman's pastoral might do well. Or what think you of a Newgate pastoral?" Gay, in consequence, transferred the songs and incidents of the Italian opera—then almost a novelty in England and in the full blaze of popularity—to the lowest class of English life. The

"Trivia" (1716).

"The Beggar's Opera" (1728).

hero of *The Beggar's Opera* is a highwayman; gaolers, pickpockets, and loose women form the *dramatis personæ*, and the scene is principally laid in Newgate. While it was a parody of the opera then in vogue, to which the fashionable Handel had made so many contributions, it became the origin of the English opera. The beauty and charming voice of Lavinia Fenton, who created the part of Polly Peachem; the satirical allusions plentifully scattered through the dialogue, and eagerly caught up by the parties of the day; the novelty and oddity of the whole spectacle, and particularly the exquisite beauty of the songs interspersed throughout, gave *The Beggar's Opera* an unparalleled success and put nearly £800 into Gay's pocket. Polly became the idol of the town, and Mrs. Fenton was removed from the stage to share the coronet of a duke. Gay was encouraged by success to continue in the same strain, and, in 1729, produced a continuation called *Polly*, which, although far inferior, was even more profitable. For, when it was prohibited by the Lord Chamberlain on the ground of its political allusions, the opposition party, in order to spite the Court, contributed so liberally to its publication that Gay cleared nearly £1200 by it. The poet, with the sanguine improvidence that characterised him, had previously met with severe losses in the famous South Sea mania; but, grown wiser by experience, and profiting by the advice of friends who possessed more practical common-sense than himself, he determined to husband the little fortune which he had accumulated. He was received into the family of the Duke and Duchess of Queensberry, where he seems to have been petted like some favourite lap-dog, till his death in 1732. He was the author of a collection of *Fables* in fluent octosyllabic verse, which were written to contribute to the education of William, Duke of Cumberland, and began to appear in 1727. Although these are the best known and most frequently cited works of the kind in English, they are immeasurably inferior in profound sense, wit, picturesqueness, and, above all, in the rare and precious quality of intense national spirit, to the fables of La Fontaine and Kriloff. They figure in most collections of poetry for the young, although, perhaps, at the end of the nineteenth century, this is less true than it was; their style renders them peculiarly easy to be learned by heart and committed to memory; and so they keep their popularity. Gay's songs and ballads, whether those which he introduced into *The Beggar's Opera* and other dramatic works, or those written separately, are among the most musical, touching, playful, and charming in the language. The subject and diction are often of the most familiar kind; but their grace of expression and the flowing harmony of their verse make them, whether pathetic or lively, masterpieces of skill. They have, too, invariably, that

"Polly" (1729).

Gay's death.

Gay's "Fables" (1727.)

rare and high attribute of the best song-writers, that the very march of their number irresistibly suggests the air to which they are to be sung.

§ 16. Nothing save a cursory mention can be given to SIR SAMUEL GARTH, the second literary physician of the period, and a Whig, as Arbuthnot was a Tory. He was a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, and, when the apothecaries attacked the charitable work of that corporation in giving gratuitous medical assistance to the poor, he came forward with his poem, half a satire, and half a plea on behalf of the college's work, *The Dispensary* (1699). THOMAS PARNELL was a friend of Pope and Swift, and became archdeacon of Clogher. He wrote, among other miscellaneous pieces, a poem called *The Hermit*, founded on a striking story in the *Gesta Romanorum*, and versified by him in a graceful and rather feeble form. THOMAS TICKELL was a friend of Addison, whose death suggested a noble elegy, the only piece of work in which Tickell rose superior to the elegant mediocrity that distinguishes the minor poetry of the age. Tickell contributed papers to *The Spectator*, and also published a translation of the first book of the *Iliad*, which, appearing in 1715, almost simultaneously with the first volume of Pope's *Homer*, led to a misunderstanding between Addison and Pope (see p. 420). He also published a collected edition of Addison's works (1721). Another member of Addison's circle was AMBROSE PHILIPS, educated at St. John's College, Cambridge. He wrote three tragedies and some *Pastorals* (1709), which were admired at the time, but are now remembered only as the object of an attack by Pope, and as the original on which Gay modelled his parodies in *The Shepherd's Week*. "The pieces of Philips that please best," says Dr. Johnson, "are those which, from Pope and Pope's adherents, procured him the name of 'Namby-Pamby,' the poems of short lines, by which he paid his court to all ages and characters, from Walpole, 'the steerer of the realm,' to Miss Pulteney in the nursery. The numbers are smooth and sprightly, and the diction is seldom faulty. They are not much loaded with thought, yet, if they had been written by Addison, they would have had admirers."

SIR SAMUEL GARTH (1661–1719).

THOMAS PARNELL (1679–1718).

THOMAS TICKELL (1686–1740).

AMBROSE PHILIPS (1675?–1749).

§ 17. The most powerful of the secondary poets of the epoch, although belonging to a different school of poetry from Pope, and inaugurating, one might say, another, was EDWARD YOUNG. He was a fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford, and began his career unsuccessfully in the diplomatic service of his country. Disappointed in his hopes and somewhat soured in his temper, he took Holy Orders and was presented by his college to the living

EDWARD YOUNG (1684–1765).

of Welwyn in Hertfordshire. Serious domestic losses intensified still further his natural tendency to morbid and melancholy reflection. His work belongs, for the most part, to his later life; but, before he abandoned his secular career, he had published one or two tragedies—*Busiris* (1719) had been well received at Drury Lane—a poem on *The Last Day* (1713), and a satire called *The Love of Fame, the Universal Passion*, written between 1725 and 1728. This, in rhyme, bears a considerable likeness to the manner of Pope, although deficient in Pope's exquisite grace and neatness. In referring the vices and follies of mankind chiefly to vanity and the foolish desire for applause, Young exhibits a false and narrow view of human nature; but there are many passages in this sevenfold satire that show a strong power of observation and description and a keen and vigorous expression which, although sometimes degenerating into a tendency to paradox and epigram, the prevailing defect of Young's genius, are not unworthy of his great contemporary and model. The second epistle, describing the character of women, may be compared with Pope's admirable work upon the same subject, and lose little by the comparison. But Young's place in the history of English poetry, long very high, and likely to remain far from unenviable, in spite of adverse criticism, is due to his striking and original poem called *The Complaint, or Night Thoughts* (1742–44), written, for the most part, at Brocket Park, near his living of Welwyn. This work, consisting of nine *nights*, or meditations, is in blank verse, and is full of reflections on life, death, immortality, and all the most solemn subjects that can engage the attention of the Christian and philosopher. The general tone of the work is sombre and gloomy, and perhaps not without a certain affectation. Yet, for an age whose sentiments and sympathies were artificial, the *Night Thoughts* had a popularity something like that of *In Memoriam* in our own. The religious character of the poem will always leave a certain impression; although the theological arguments are commonplace, and the atheist against whom Young directs them is not a very lively creation, yet they are not altogether vacuous. Young was in no sense a humorist, and his prevailing defect was a tendency to antithesis and epigrammatic contrast. He lacked the discrimination which would enable him to distinguish between the profound and the superficial; and this want of taste frequently leads him into illustrations and comparisons puerile rather than ingenious, as when he compares the stars to diamonds in a seal-ring on the Almighty's finger. His ease in writing precluded him from keeping up to a satisfactory level of elevations; he is by jerks and starts pathetic and sublime, and sometimes neither. The march of his verse is always solemn and majestic, and a certain Miltonic character is to be discerned

Young's satiric poetry.

The "Night Thoughts" (1742–4).

Young's style.

in it; but it has little of Milton's rolling, thunderous melody; and Young, amid his most lofty bursts of declamation, is fond of introducing familiar expressions and images, often with great effect. His talent in epigram is best illustrated by the large number of expressions that have passed from his writings into colloquial usage: "Procrastination is the thief of time," "All men think all men mortal but themselves," are familiar examples. A sort of quaint solemnity, like the feeling produced by the ornament on a Gothic tomb—last century Gothic, however—is the leading character of the impression which the *Night Thoughts* are nowadays calculated to make upon the reader; and it is a strong proof of Young's genius, that the quaintness does not spoil the solemnity.

§ 18. The poetry of the Scottish lowlands had, during this Augustan age, an admirable representative in ALLAN RAMSAY, a member of a humble class, first a wigmaker, and afterwards a bookseller in Edinburgh. About three years before his birth, died Francis Sempill of Beltrees, the last of a family which had for many years preserved the traditions of Scottish song. Ramsay was to form the link between the old bards of the Stewart epoch and Burns, who was born the year after his death. His disposition was happy, jovial, and contented, and his life was spent in reviving the popular taste for the old Scottish poets, and in editing and imitating the incomparable songs and ballads current among the people. He is chiefly famous as the author of the pastoral poem, *The Gentle Shepherd*, which grew out of two eclogues he had written, descriptive of the rural life and pleasures of Scotland, and appeared in its complete form in 1725. It consists of a series of dialogues in verse, written in the melodious, picturesque dialect of the country, and interwoven into an improbable, but simple and not uninteresting love-story. The pictures of rural life given in this pretty poem are equally faithful and ideal; the representation of peasant life and sentiment which Ramsay, with the true instinct of a poet, knew how to make strictly true to reality without a particle of vulgarity, is thoroughly exact; the delineation of character is light and firm; and altogether the poem, however inferior in romantic idealism, is far superior in interest to the great pastorals of the Renaissance, the *Pastor Fido*, the *Galatea*, or even Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess*. The songs which occur at intervals, although they may sometimes be out of place by keeping back the march of events, are, for the most part, eminently beautiful. Ramsay was a charming song-writer, and many songs are scattered through his voluminous compositions, in which he revived older ballads and added imitations or original poems of his own. In this way he completed—it is in many respects, especially in view of the difficulty of the task, his masterpiece—the merry and indecorous ballad called *Christ's Kirk*

ALLAN RAMSAY (1686–1758).

"*The Gentle Shepherd*" (1725).

upon the Green, which had been left unfinished by James I of Scotland, the author of *The Kingis Quair*. And certainly one cannot overrate the influence which Ramsay exerted on the admirable lyric genius of his great successor, Burns. The treasures of tenderness, beautiful description, and sly humour which Ramsay cherished from Dunbar, James I, Sir David Lyndsay, and a thousand nameless bards of his nation, were concentrated into one splendid focus in the writings of the author of *Tam o' Shanter*.

"Christ's Kirk upon the Green."

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

MINOR POETS.

Sir Richard Blackmore (d. 1729), a physician in extensive practice, knighted by William III, wrote several epic poems, of which *The Creation* (1712) has been considered the least uninteresting. He was bitterly attacked by Pope and his friends in the *Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus*, chiefly on the ground of his *Paraphases on Job* (1700). Johnson wrote in his defence, that "by the unremitted enmity of the wits, whom he provoked more by his virtue than his dulness, he has been exposed to worse treatment than he deserved."

George Granville, Lord Lansdowne (1667–1735), was a critic, rather than a poet. Waller, whose faults he imitated, commended his early pieces; and Pope, whom he urged to write *Windsor Forest*, styled him "Granville the polite." His verses to Mira are best known of his fugitive pieces. Mira was Frances, Countess of Newburgh. Lansdowne published a complete edition of his poems in 1732.

Isaac Watts (1674–1748) stands quite outside the circle of Pope's friends or enemies. He was born at Southampton, and received his education from a dissenting minister, Thomas Rowe. In 1702 he became minister of the Independent congregation at Stoke Newington, where he laboured, under declining health, till 1712. Sir Thomas Abney, of Abney Park, a mansion in the neighbourhood, then invited him to his house. Watts lived as the guest, first of the baronet, and then of his widow, preaching occasionally, but chiefly devoting himself to study and literature, for the last thirty-six years of his life. He had great talents and used them in many ways, not merely in theological writings, but in poetry and science. His *Logic* (1725) was once used as a text-book at Oxford; and he wrote a handbook to astronomy and geography, *The Knowledge of the Heavens and Earth* (1726). His hymns are well known to all Englishmen—few modern hymns can surpass "God moves in a mysterious way" for a certain majesty of simple sound. At the same time, he was a master of the art of bathos, and some of his lines are rather unjustly held up to ridicule. He was the first man to do anything for children's intellectual training in a day when children were scarcely considered, and on that account he deserves great honour. He received his Doctor's degree from Edinburgh in 1728. "Academical honours," said Johnson, "would have more value if they were always bestowed with equal judgment." Dr. Watts' tomb is at Abney Park, which is now the well-known Nonconformist cemetery in North London.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE AGE OF ANNE.
II. ADDISON, THE ESSAYISTS, AND THE PHILOSOPHERS.

§ 1. JOSEPH ADDISON: his life. *The Campaign* and other early works. § 2. His connection with SIR RICHARD STEELE. Life of Steele. His journalistic enterprises. § 3. Addison's *Cato*. His marriage and political life. His death. Pope's *Atticus*. Character of Addison. § 4. Addison as an essayist and writer of prose. § 5. Addison as a poet. § 6. SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE. § 7. FRANCIS ATTERBURY. § 8. LORD SHAFTESBURY. The *Characteristics*. § 9. LORD BOLINGBROKE. § 10. BERNARD DE MANDEVILLE and *The Fable of the Bees*. § 11. GEORGE BERKELEY: his philosophy and its development. § 12. WILLIAM LAW. The *Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*. § 13. LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU'S letters.

§ 1. THE class of writers which forms the subject of this chapter is identified with the creation of a new and popular form of English literature, destined to exercise a powerful and most beneficial influence on the manners and intellectual development of society. The mode of publication was periodical, and thus a number of small pamphlets in journalistic form made their appearance, many of them enjoying an immense popularity, combining a small modicum of public news with a short essay or lively dissertation on some subject connected with morality or criticism, and inculcating principles of virtue in great things, and of good taste and politeness in the small affairs of life. The *Essays* of Montaigne, although of a somewhat different order, had a great deal to do with the popular taste for this desultory kind of writing, which soon became general throughout Europe. It was, however, in England that it was first combined with the principle of journalism; and the first departure in this line is due to Sir Richard Steele, of whom we shall give some account presently. His most illustrious fellow-labourer in the task of disseminating a better tone of manners and taste for intellectual enjoyments among the higher and middle classes was JOSEPH ADDISON. This great writer and excellent man was the son of Lancelot Addison, dean of Lichfield, a divine with some reputation for learning. He was born at Milston, near Amesbury, and was educated at the Charterhouse, from which he passed to Queen's, and ultimately

Appearance of the Essay.

JOSEPH ADDISON (1672–1719).

to Magdalen College at Oxford. He distinguished himself at college by his regular conduct, his assiduous attention to his studies, and his exquisite taste in Latin verse. Indeed, his knowledge of Latin literature, and especially of the poets, was very accurate and profound. His graceful college exercises—in particular, his poems on Punch and Judy (the *Machinæ Gesticulantes*) and on the barometer, made his reputation at Magdalen. His first essay in English verse was a laudatory poem *To Mr. Dryden* (1693); and, in 1695, this was followed by an eulogy of William III, written in Dryden's own strain of flattery. Dryden took Addison under his wing; and the young poet, under this august protection, published a translation of the fourth Georgic of Virgil, and a versified *Account of the Greatest English Poets* (1694). During these early years Addison was residing at Oxford; but, in 1699, Lord Somers procured for the rising neophyte a pension of £300, which enabled him to travel in France and Italy. He gave speedy proof of the advantage which he gained by this opportunity of employing and extending his classical and philosophical acquirements. During his sojourn in France he had an interview with the aged Boileau, then in his sixty-fifth year, the patriarch of poetry and criticism, and the literary lawgiver, not only to his own country, but to England. King William's death deprived him of his pension; and, after his return to England in 1703, he passed some time in London very poor in purse, but exhibiting that dignified patience and quiet reserve which, all through his life, made his character so estimable. The chief fruit of his travels was his first prose work, *Remarks on several Parts of Italy* (1705). In his retirement he was found out by the ministry, who were desirous that Marlborough's recent triumphs should be worthily celebrated in verse; and Godolphin was deputed to propose to him that he should write a poem on the immortal campaign which had just terminated so gloriously—and at the same time, so uselessly—in the victory of Blenheim. Addison readily undertook the task. When the unfinished portion was shown to the ministers, they were in raptures; and when the whole poem eventually appeared (1704) under the title of *The Campaign*, it was universally pronounced to be superior, not only to Boileau, but to anything that had hitherto been written in the same style. The verses appear to modern readers stiff and artificial enough, with the possible exception of that very ingenious passage in which Marlborough is compared to the destroying angel, and his successful campaign to the great storm of 1703. Literary services were at that time often rewarded with political advancement, and from this moment Addison's career was brilliant and successful. He was appointed under-secretary to Sir Charles Hedges and secretary to Lord Wharton, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland; and beside these important posts he received at

"The Campaign" (1704).

Political success.

different times various other lucrative and honourable places. In 1706 he brought out a pretty opera or musical entertainment called *Rosamond*; and it is probable that, about this time, he sketched out the comedy of *The Drummer*, which, however, was not brought out till after his death. It was then published by his friend Steele, who is said to have had some share in its composition. It is deficient in plot and in vivacity of interest; but many of the scenes show much comic power, and the character of Vellum, the old steward, is in particular extremely amusing.

Other early work.

§ 2. It was about this period of his career that Addison embarked in the literary venture first launched by his friend Steele, with his share in which is connected the most durable element of his fame. The two names are almost inseparable, and their lives run close together. SIR RICHARD STEELE was born in Dublin, and had been Addison's schoolfellow at the Charterhouse. He went to Christ Church from school, but removed in 1691 to Merton, where he stayed till 1694. His friendship with Addison was the abiding passion of his life—a curious and most affecting mixture of veneration and love. Steele's character has been injured by two of the greatest nineteenth-century writers—by the unfair portrait of Macaulay and the affected pity of Thackeray. In money matters he was extravagant, nor was he altogether exempt from the common vices of the time. But he was honest and honourable. It was his sincere endeavour to do what was right. He was a good Christian and the fondest of husbands; and, if his character had nothing of that somewhat frigid perfection and self-restraint which were Addison's distinguishing marks, his warm impressionability made him at once more approachable and lovable. He left Oxford without any warning, to become a private in the Horse Guards, and was consequently disinherited. His first work, however, a poem on Queen Mary's funeral, called *The Procession*, and dedicated to Lord Cutts, a colonel in the Coldstream Guards, gained him a commission, and he rose to be captain in his patron's regiment. As an officer, he astonished the town by his wild extravagance; but, in the middle of it all, he wrote a moral and religious treatise entitled *The Christian Hero* (1701), which breathed the loftiest sentiments of piety and virtue and made him unpopular in his regiment. To remedy this, and restore a just balance, he took to writing comedy. *The Funeral, or Grief à la Mode*, was put on the stage at Drury Lane in 1701, and succeeded. *The Lying Lover* (1703) and *The Tender Husband* (1705) were failures, and Steele wrote only one more play, *The Conscious Lovers* (1722). He was a man of ready, if not solid talent, and, being an ardent partisan and pamphleteer, was rewarded by Government, in 1707, with the place of gazetteer, which gave him almost a monopoly of

Connection of ADDISON *and* SIR RICHARD STEELE (1672–1729).

Steele as poet, soldier, and playwright.

official news at a time when newspapers were still in their infancy. He determined to profit by the facilities which this post afforded him, and to found a new species of periodical which should combine ordinary intelligence with a series of light and agreeable essays on topics of universal interest, likely to improve the taste, manners, and morals of society. It should be remarked that this was a period at which literary taste was at its lowest ebb among the middle and fashionable classes of England. Their amusements, when not merely frivolous, were either immoral or brutal. Gambling, even among women, was frightfully prevalent, and the sports of the men were marked with a general stamp of cruelty, and with an indulgence in drink little less than blackguardly. In such a state of things, intellectual pleasures and acquirements were regarded either with wonder or contempt. Fops and fine ladies actually prided themselves on their ignorance of spelling, and every allusion to books was scouted as pedantry. This was the disease which Steele desired to cure, and he determined to treat it, not with formal doses of moral declamation, but with homœopathic quantities of good sense, good taste, and pleasing morality, disguised beneath an easy and fashionable style. In 1709 he founded *The Tatler*, a small penny sheet which appeared three times a week. The first number came out on April 12, and each henceforward contained a short essay, extending to about a couple of octavo pages, while the rest was filled up with news and advertisements. The popularity of this new kind of journal was instant and immense; no tea-table, no coffee-house, in that age of coffee-houses, was without it, and the authors, working, not in the spirit of literary recluses, but with the ease, pleasantry, and knowledge of life of men about town, soon gained the attention of the class which they addressed. *The Tatler* ran on for about twenty-one months, and ceased on January 2, 1711, but, on the following first of March, re-appeared as the far more successful and celebrated *Spectator*. The new journal was carried on upon very much the same plan, but was daily instead of tri-weekly. On December 6, 1712, it was discontinued, after running to 555 numbers, apparently from a voluntary arrangement on the author's part rather than from any failure in popularity. On March 12, 1713, a third journal, *The Guardian*, appeared, and reached its 176th number on October 1. It was strikingly inferior to *The Spectator*, both in its originality and in its success. It continued its existence, having revived on October 6, in the 57 numbers of *The Englishman*. Steele had no remarkably useful helpers at this time, and his subjects became chiefly political. In 1714 he issued two newspapers, called *The Lover* and *The Reader*, both of which failed. Towards the end of the same year he combined with Addison in a supplement of eighty numbers to *The Spectator*. The chequered history of

His journalistic projects.

Foundation of "The Tatler" (1709).

"The Spectator" and its successors.

Steele's journalism owes its rather melancholy variety to two causes. In the first place, Steele, although master of a singularly ready pen, was of course obliged to obtain as much assistance as he could from his friends, and many writers of the time furnished hints and contributions—Swift, Berkeley, Eustace Budgell, and others. The most constant and powerful aid was supplied by Addison, who entered warmly into the project, and contributed a very considerable, and certainly the most valuable proportion of papers, amounting in *The Tatler* to one-sixth, in *The Spectator* to nearly one-half, and in *The Guardian* to one-third of the whole quantity. His contributions to *The Spectator* are usually signed with one of the letters composing the word *Clio*. When Steele was deprived of this valuable help, he found the labour of writing alone too great. The second misfortune which befell him was his estrangement from Swift. The most malignant side of Swift's militant Toryism was shown to Steele in his days of Whig pamphleteering, and this drew away a certain amount of support and interest from the struggling writer. When the Whig party came into power at Anne's death, Steele was appointed supervisor of Drury Lane, and was knighted in 1715; but from this time forward his friendly relations with Addison suffered a gradual change until Addison's death in 1719. Steele survived him for ten years. Broken in health and afflicted by numerous personal troubles, he died at Carmarthen in September, 1729.

Addison's connection with Steele's periodicals.

End of Steele's life.

§ 3. In 1713 Addison brought out his tragedy of *Cato*, a solemn, cold, and pompous series of tirades in the French taste, constructed with a scrupulous allegiance to the severest rules of the classical unities. The plot is totally guiltless of interest or probability, and the characters, including Cato himself, are simply frigid embodiments of rhetorical virtue and patriotism. Their declamation, however, is here and there dignified and noble, and the hero's famous soliloquy on suicide is a passage of great eloquence, if not great dramatic merit. The tragedy, however, enjoyed an enormous popularity, in which its stateliness of style had, doubtless, some share; but its success was principally due to the eminence of its author, and to the avidity with which its political allusions were caught up and applied by furious partisans. Addison had retired from political life on the fall of Anne's Whig ministers; at her death he returned to office with his friends. At the end of 1715 he returned to journalism for a short time with a political paper, *The Freeholder*, which lasted until the summer of 1716. In 1716 he married the Dowager Countess of Warwick. His married life seems to have been unhappy, or at least irksome. His place was with the frequenters of the coffee-houses and with the wits; as the husband of a fine lady, and the master of one of the finest houses in town, he was out

Addison's "Cato" (1713).

His marriage.

of his element. Lady Warwick was, in addition, a haughty and irritable woman. Addison, on the other hand, was diffident and placid. He had never made his name as an orator in the House, or as a man of business in his public offices. The anecdotes which represent him as incapable of writing an ordinary business paper are probably exaggerated; but, at any rate, his invincible timidity prevented him from speaking with effect, while his extraordinary powers of conversation are said to have deserted him in the presence of more than one or two hearers—and these had to be intimate friends. To conquer this natural shyness, and to give flow and vivacity to his ideas, he indulged, it is said, in heavy drinking, both with his friends and when he wanted to write. Excessive drinking was the fashion rather than the vice of the age; and this, almost the only fault in Addison's singularly blameless character, must be regarded with leniency.

His personal characteristics.

In 1717 Addison became secretary of state in Sunderland's ministry—the highest office which he reached in his political career—and in this eminent position he showed the same liberality, modesty, and public spirit that had characterised his whole life. Nothing is more honourable to him than the fact that, in an age when political struggles were carried on with the most unscrupulous perfidy and intolerant violence, he should never have been induced, either by interest or cowardice, to desert his friends of the opposite party. In all his political controversies and the conduct of his journals, he showed a tone of candour, moderation, and good breeding which he was almost the first to introduce into political discussion. He maintained his old personal friendship with Swift, even when the great satirist had deserted his party. But Addison's political career was a mere accident; he was never a partisan. He held his secretaryship about eleven months. In 1718 he retired on an annuity of £1500, and determined to devote himself, in the evening of his days, to writing an elaborate work on the evidences of Christianity. This, however, was not to be, for in June, 1719, he was carried off by asthma and dropsy. His body was treated with an almost royal respect; he was laid in state in the Jerusalem Chamber, and received a splendid funeral by lamplight in Westminster Abbey.

His political conduct.

His death (1719).

Addison, if he had his devoted friends, made, towards the end of his life, a bitter enemy. Pope's magnificent and terrible indictment of Atticus did not appear in print till 1723, four years after Atticus himself was dead, when the verses were printed by themselves in a miscellany published by Curll. The traditional view of the episode is that the quarrel lay all on the side of Pope's malignity and insincerity; and nobody who knows anything of the two men and their characters can deny that this is very likely. Pope looked on Addison, the

Relations between Addison and Pope.

head of a literary clique which was very exclusive in its treatment of young authors, with jealousy and suspicion. When Tickell, a member of Addison's inner circle, made the publication of his own version of part of Homer coincide with that of Pope's, one cannot wonder that Pope felt some annoyance. On the other hand, it is easy to dismiss Pope's frivolous suspicion that Addison, in advising him to leave the first sketch of *The Rape of the Lock* without emendation, was acting disingenuously and masking envy under the disguise of friendly counsel. In the end, of all the accusations which Pope cast at his memory, Addison might plead guilty to none save the venial fault of loving to surround himself with an obsequious circle of literary admirers; the rest must be put down to that spitefulness which was inseparable from Pope's nervous and sensitive temper. Addison's character seems to have approached, as nearly as the frailties and imperfections of human nature will allow, an ideal standard. The weaknesses of good men are, however, strongly marked; and, mingled with Addison's modesty and religion, there was not a little of the prig. The story of his sending on his deathbed for Lord Warwick, his stepson and former pupil, and telling him that he had desired his presence to show him how a Christian can die, is a proof of this; and the impression which this object-lesson left on Lord Warwick, if we are to judge from his subsequent career, was the reverse of encouraging.

Summary of Addison's character.

§ 4. Of Addison's works, it is the prose portion alone which gives him the right to his very high place in the English literature of the eighteenth century; and, of his prose writings, almost exclusively those essays which he contributed to *The Tatler*, *Spectator*, and *Guardian*. They deal with an immense variety of subjects. Although we know that Swift may, in some cases, have supplied the original suggestion, yet enough, and more than enough, remains to prove the richness and inventiveness of Addison's own genius; and, even were this not so, their style and treatment would still place them among the masterpieces of fiction and criticism. The essays certainly met the popular demand for daily variety. There are parables like *The Vision of Mirza*, fancies like the transmigrations of the monkey, feats of imagination like the passage on the judgment of women in Hades; there are calm meditations, astronomical musings, or reflections in Westminster Abbey; there are playful mock-criticisms, descriptions, sometimes mildly satirical, of Mr. Penkethman, the puppet-show, or the Opera; and all these are mingled together with noble appreciations of the half-neglected grandeur of Milton, or of the rude, energetic splendour of *Chevy Chase*. Nothing is too high and nothing too low to furnish matter for reflection; from the fashions of the day to the fundamental principles of morality and religion, everything is treated with the same sense of fitness and proportion.

Addison's Essays.

Their subjects and variety.

Addison was long held up to admiration as the finest model of elegant and idiomatic English prose, and, even in later days, when a more florid style became the fashion, his singular clearness and admirably good taste were still recognised. To compare him with Swift would be useless; the imagination and methods of the two were so utterly different; but, when it comes to a question of prose style, there is no question that the verdict is on Addison's side. His great distinction is that, with a very serious moral on the end of his pen, he has nevertheless given his prose an ease and lightness which, at first sight, is incompatible with the province of a moral essay. It has just that apparent superficiality which would attract the casual reader, and yet experience reveals in it a depth and colour which, in the prose of Addison's age, are not very familiar.

Addison's prose style.

The immortality of *The Spectator* is, however, due to Sir Roger de Coverley. The age of *The Tatler*, *The Spectator*, and *The Guardian*, was the age of clubs in England. Steele also, in order to give his journals a vivacity and individuality of their own, ascribed them to some fictitious editor, the philosophic spectator of the gaieties and follies of society—Isaac Bickerstaff, or the short-faced gentleman. None of these inventions are very memorable, save one. Mr. Spectator, the short-faced gentleman himself, with his somewhat satirical but good-humoured interest in all that goes on round him, introduces himself as connected with an imaginary club, consisting of representatives of the chief classes in town and rural society. Sir Andrew Freeport is the type of the merchant, Captain Sentry of the soldier, Sir Roger de Coverley of the old-fashioned country gentleman, Will Honeycomb of the man of fashion and pleasure—all linked together by Mr. Spectator. Steele was probably the inventor of these types; and, for the most part, the impression which they leave is merely the pleasure to be derived from a chapter of excellent and fluent prose. Sir Roger de Coverley, however, with his adventures and surroundings, forms a perfectly finished picture, in form forecasting Sir Walter Scott, in its humour recalling Cervantes himself. Indeed, the lovable combination of virtues and foibles in the old squire is an instance of humour in its highest and most delicate perfection. Sir Roger's visit to London, his conduct at the club, his expedition by water to Westminster Abbey, his remarks on the statues and curiosities which he saw there, are all treated with the same caressing touch. Even better known than this is Mr. Spectator's visit to the old knight's Gothic mansion, Sir Roger's exhibition of his picture-gallery, his behaviour in church and upon the bench of the quorum, his long-standing amour with the widow. These traits of character, with the inimitable sketches of the dependents, the chaplain, the butler, and Will Wimble, the poor relation, must place Addison very high among the great observers and painters of human nature.

"The Spectator" and Sir Roger de Coverley.

§ 5. Addison's poetry, although rated very highly in his own time, has suffered the usual fate of contemporary success. In Latin verse, he wrote with an elegance and classic purity of style which has seldom been reached by other scholars. Nevertheless, like all modern writers of Latin poetry, with the exception of Milton and Vincent Bourne, Addison is merely the compiler of a skilful *cento*, and reproduces thought with a barrenness which is the fatal accompaniment of work in a foreign language. The English songs in *Rosamond* are very pleasing and musical; and, had he continued to write opera, he would undoubtedly have left something which rival authors would have found it difficult to surpass. Perhaps the sacred portion of his verse is likely to be remembered longest. His hymns, with their lofty, contemplative piety, and the fine, simple severity of their style, are certainly, for the early part of the eighteenth century, remarkable productions. The majestic version of Psalm xix, beginning "The spacious firmament on high," is one of the finest hymns in English; and a lyric tuned to a lower key, "When all Thy mercies, O my God, my rising soul surveys," has enjoyed a long popularity, due, perhaps, less to its literary merit than to its tone of sincere devotion. Addison's earlier and more ambitious poems, even including the once popular *Campaign*, have little to distinguish them from the vast mass of regular, frigid, irreproachable verse which was poured forth under the influence of Pope and the classical school. Pope, by virtue of his great genius and its perfect adaptability to this style of poetry, stands apart from the rest; but Addison, with his artificially polished metres, is the very type of a refined mediocrity attained by mechanical means. Of course, such purely automatic address was fatal to any vigour or originality of invention.

Addison's poetry.

His hymns.

Lifelessness of his heroic poems.

§ 6. The name of SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE really belongs to an earlier generation than that of Pope or Addison, and he was dead nearly three years before Anne began to reign; but his connection with the literature of his day allies him with the great wits of the century whose beginning he did not live to see. Swift was his relative and dependent; his own name is linked, not very much to its credit, with Bentley's; and, finally, these accidents of his later life are really all that is definitely interesting about him. He wrote no book that made his name—simply a number of desultory tracts and essays and a bundle of charming love-letters. He was the son of Sir John Temple, Master of the Rolls in Ireland; he was at Emmanuel College, Cambridge; and, after a long and trying courtship, in which he displayed great affection and constancy, he married Dorothy Osborne, the daughter of a Royalist knight. Although he himself was nominally a Puritan, he went over to the King's side after the

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE (1628–1699).

Restoration, and was employed for several years in the diplomatic service. He was perhaps the most brilliant diplomatist of an age whose foreign politics were sufficiently shifty and intricate, and it was he who negotiated with de Witt the Triple Alliance. But Temple was timid and selfish, delicate and self-indulgent; and, while still little more than a middle-aged man, he retired from the active political life of that stormy and factious period, and amused himself, first in his villa at Sheen, and afterwards at his lovely retreat of Moor Park, near Farnham, with gardening and the *belles lettres*, pursuing everything with a pompous affectation which the result scarcely justified. However, his contemporaries were vastly impressed by the magnificence of his manners and the memory of his diplomatic career, and gave extravagant praise to his *Essays*, which were easy and graceful, but not very profound. They were published in two parts (1680 and 1692) under the title of *Miscellanea*. Temple observed things accurately; he was not insensible to the beauties of nature; and he always wrote like a gentleman—and these particulars, taken together, sum up the merit of his work. It is, however, an unfortunate circumstance that he chose to play the classical scholar, as well as the man of taste, in introducing the unprofitable controversy of the ancients and moderns (see Notes and Illustrations to this chapter) into England. His essay, *Of Ancient and Modern Learning*, showed a childish ignorance and presumption that met its reward at the hands of Bentley, and deserved even more contempt than it actually received.

His diplomatic career.

His work: contemporary opinion and its real value.

§ 7. No name, among the brilliant circle which surrounded Pope and Swift, is more remarkable than that of FRANCIS ATTERBURY, the Tory and Jacobite Bishop of Rochester, a man of great intellectual activity, of considerable, though by no means profound learning, and of a violent, imperious, and restless temper. He was educated at Westminster and at Christ Church, Oxford. Without being at all quarrelsome, he had a fondness for controversy, and his virgin effort was directed against Obadiah Walker, the Romanist Master of University College. Some years later he entered, on behalf of his pupil, Boyle, into the Bentley controversy. The reply to Bentley, of which he was the principal author, was considered by the fashionable and unlearned world to have demolished completely his adversary's arguments. Atterbury's eloquence, polite learning, and his constant defence of the rights of Convocation, gained him speedy preferment in the Church. From the archdeaconry of Totnes he rose to the deanery of Carlisle; and from Carlisle he went to Christ Church. At Christ Church his politics and his overbearing temper soon excited general confusion. However, in 1713, he was made Bishop of Rochester and dean of Westminster, and became conspicuous as one of the mainstays

FRANCIS ATTERBURY (1662–1732).

of the extreme Tory party in the House of Lords. His appointment had been the work of a Tory ministry, and, on the fall of Harley's coalition, he was not unnaturally regarded by the Court party with suspicion. He had been known as an ardent supporter of the project for reinstating the Pretender at the death of Queen Anne; and, at the beginning of George I's reign, he engaged in a secret correspondence with the Jacobites abroad. In his difficult position his conduct cannot be severely blamed, but it laid him open, at least, to a charge of treason. In 1722 he was attainted of treasonable practices by a Bill of pains and penalties, deprived of his bishopric, and condemned to exile. He went abroad, first to Brussels, then to Paris, and ultimately to Montpellier. The Pretender invited him to Rome, but he refused to go. All through his political misfortunes his attachment to his own Church was sincere; and, to the end of his life, he never resigned his title to the see of Rochester. His private character, with its warm affections and friendships, was a strange contrast to his truculent attitude in public affairs. He was Pope's most intimate friend, and guided him with wise and valuable literary counsel; and there are few stories more pathetic than the anecdote of his dying daughter's long journey from England to Toulouse to receive his blessing, to take the last sacrament at his hands, and to die in his embrace. As a critic, his judgment was sound, although he was, of course, a more fervent admirer of Restoration poetry and its artificial tendency than more recent writers; and his estimate of Waller's work in English verse, exaggerated to a modern reader, reflects the opinion of his day. At the same time he was not hindered by his political ardour from fully appreciating the genius of Milton. His own style, in the fragments which he left, is exceptionally clear, and reads with a colloquial ease; and it is to be regretted that his public ambition and intrigue prevented him from bequeathing to us more than a few sermons, speeches, and scattered criticisms.

His political misfortunes.

His character: its influence on his writing.

§ 8. ANTHONY ASHLEY COOPER, EARL OF SHAFTESBURY, was the grandson of Charles II's unprincipled chancellor, and the pupil of his grandfather's great *protégé*, John Locke. His literary reputation, of a peculiar kind in his own day, is now comparatively obscure; but, as a moralist and metaphysician, and as a model of elegant and classical, though somewhat unequal, prose, he stands very high. He seems, from a certain consciousness of his rank, to have abstained from publishing very much. He was singularly cultured and refined, and spoke with authority upon æsthetic questions; in fact, his chosen position was that of a competent dabbler. Nevertheless, he thought more deeply than he wrote. In spite of his early training at the feet of Locke, he attached him-

LORD SHAFTESBURY (1671–1713).

Shaftesbury and the deists.

self to an opposite school of thought, and is, in effect, the chief of the group of writers who are known as the English deists. His scepticism was modified, however, by a Platonism which he probably received from the study of Cudworth and his school. While the whole tendency of his mind was speculative and enquiring, his Platonism raised his moral standard to a higher plane, gave a solidity to his thought, and an eloquence to his style which they could not have attained otherwise. In 1711 he gathered his occasional pieces into three volumes, which he called *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, and Times*. The treatises which it contained had, for the most part, been published between 1699 and 1710. Their style is not always at its best, for at times it has an ambitious and affected flavour; but its Platonic manner, in the dialogue called *The Moralists*, is eloquent and lucid. His great ethical principle was an insistence on the morality of human nature; he maintained that in man there was a distinct moral sense which enabled him to distinguish almost instinctively between good and evil actions. Whether he was, as has been argued, the discoverer of this theory or not, it had its influence upon contemporary thought; and the French encyclopædists found that his tentative and alloyed deism furnished their own more thorough-going systems with important suggestions. An even more direct result of his philosophy, on its more positive side, is to be seen in Pope's *Essay on Man*.

The "Characteristics" (1711).

Shaftesbury's metaphysics: their subsequent influence.

§ 9. Henry Saint-John, Viscount Bolingbroke, who also posed as a deist, was, in his writing, as really superficial as Shaftesbury affected to be. As a statesman and orator no one could have had a more brilliant and meteoric career than this accomplished debauchee, who, after passing through Eton and possibly Christ Church, and acquainting himself with the worst ways of the town, took to politics and at once established his reputation as an eloquent partisan. From 1700 to 1715 he took part in public affairs, first as a private member, then as secretary of war. In 1710, as secretary of state, he was Harley's colleague in the brilliant and ill-fated coalition which Swift helped so vigorously; and, meanwhile, he joined in the diversions of the coterie which surrounded Pope. We have already, in speaking of Swift, said something of the disaster which befell Harley's ministry. Harley and Bolingbroke could not agree; the Tory coalition melted; Bolingbroke, like Atterbury, engaged in a treasonable correspondence with the Court of Saint-Germain's, and, to escape the dangers of a formal impeachment, was obliged to go into exile. His unpopularity was increased by the part which he had taken in the Peace of Utrecht. In France he actually entered the service of the Pretender, but was soon dismissed through intrigue, and, on

Lord Bolingbroke (1678–1751).

His political career and fate.

receiving a pardon, returned to England in 1723. He again flung himself heart and soul into political life, and became Walpole's chief opponent. After Walpole's fall, he again retired to France, and amused the declining years of his life with political, moral, and philosophical writing. In his last years he was again in England, living at Battersea, and published (1749) his *Letters on the Spirit of Patriotism*, and his *Idea of a Patriot King*, which, some years before, he had given in MS. to Pope. When he found, after Pope's death, that the poet, contrary to a solemn promise, had caused a number of copies to be printed, he affected great anger, and so bequeathed a celebrated scandal to literary annals. Of his other works, his *Letter to Sir William Wyndham* (written 1717), in defence of his political conduct, and his *Letters on the Study and Use of History*, written in France (1735), are the most important. His style is lofty, self-important, and oratorical, but his philosophical indifference to the usual objects of ambition is, to every reader who knows anything about the man, an impertinent pose. It was to Bolingbroke that Pope dedicated his *Essay on Man*; and, without doubt, the poet, who was not so able a philosopher as to see clearly the logical result of his speculations, owed some of his ideas to Bolingbroke, and still more to Shaftesbury. At all events, it took a considerable effort of sophistry on Warburton's part to reconcile the *Essay on Man* with orthodoxy. Bolingbroke was not merely a deist, but an acknowledged atheist. His writings against revealed religion, consisting chiefly of letters to his friends, including Pope, were bequeathed by him to the infidel publisher David Mallet, who brought them out, with Bolingbroke's other works, in 1754. His attacks on Christianity, although the brilliance of their author's career gave them some importance, are not very serious; nor can they be regarded as more than the impudent by-play of a wit whose self-conceit led him to think himself a patron and creditor of philosophy.

His later life.

Bolingbroke's style: his philosophical position.

§ 10. BERNARD MANDEVILLE has won his doubtful reputation as a disturbing factor in the philosophical society of his time. He was born and educated in Holland, and settled as a small physician in London. With a considerable amount of humour and a larger stock of indecent cynicism, he became a pamphleteer, and, from 1700, or earlier, to his death, prepared an unsavoury legacy for posterity. Most of this is fortunately forgotten, but his *Fable of the Bees* was continually before the public. This persistent little book was, in its original form, a clumsy poem called *The Grumbling Hive* (1705), and told the story of a hive of vicious bees, whose prosperity, depending on their vices, was ruined on their becoming virtuous. Mandeville added prose digressions to his apologue in 1714, and, on finding that the public was waking up to the theory which it

BERNARD MANDEVILLE (1670?–1733).

"The Fable of the Bees": its history.

implied, published it in a much augmented form, in 1723, under the title of *The Fable of the Bees, or Private Vices Public Benefits*. This appeal to notoriety was a great success. The book was prosecuted. Berkeley attacked it in *Alciphron*, and William Law published scathing *Remarks* upon it. Mandeville was not afflicted with acute sensitiveness, and the complaints of the virtuous caused him only to blaspheme the more in subsequent editions, each of which augmented the book until, in its posthumous form, it became a very considerable treatise and attained the proportions of a manual of social ethics. Mandeville wrote well and vividly, with an unsparing realism which recalls Swift from time to time; but he had absolutely no standard of morality, and, when his object was not purely to annoy people, stood on the lowest ground of expediency. His impish coarseness amused itself at the expense of Shaftesbury's superiority and supercilious culture, and his satire always returned to this mark, which, it must be owned, was rather obvious. No greater contrast could exist than this between the exclusive sceptic, who wrote about virtue in the most meditative of styles, and the popular cynic, who recommended vice in the broadest language of his day.

Mandeville's style.

§ 11. GEORGE BERKELEY, Bishop of Cloyne, has a name to which his attack on Mandeville forms but a small contribution. He was an Irishman, a native of Kilkenny, and a scholar of Kilkenny College. A great part of his early life, from 1700 to 1713, was spent at Trinity College, Dublin, where he obtained a fellowship. During these thirteen years, he built up his metaphysical system, which he developed in three successive works, an *Essay towards a New Theory of Vision* (1709), *The Principles of Human Knowledge* (1710), and *Hylas and Philonous*, a series of Platonic dialogues (1713). At twenty-eight he came to London, and won golden opinions from Pope and Swift, who both extolled the perfection of his intellect and character. The next eight years of his life were passed, for the most part, in foreign travel, and he did not return to Ireland till 1721. In 1724 he was appointed to the deanery of Derry, and resigned his fellowship. However, Derry saw very little of him, for, just about this time, he conceived the plan of establishing an university or missionary college in the Bermudas, with the idea of civilising and converting the Carib savages. He pressed it with great energy, and, having succeeded in obtaining a grant of £20,000—which was never paid him—from Parliament, he married a wife, and, in 1728, started for America. For three years afterwards the dean of Derry chose Rhode Island for the centre of his operations, presumably with the intention of being able to start for the "still-vex'd Bermoothes" at a moment's notice. However, the Government did nothing for him; and the only result of Berkeley's self-imposed exile was *Alciphron, or the Minute Philosopher*, which he published on his return

GEORGE BERKELEY (1685–1753).

His Bermuda scheme.

to England (1732). In 1734 he was made Bishop of Cloyne, and went back, after nearly ten years' absence, to Ireland. At Cloyne he proved himself a model bishop, and spent his time in more projects for the good of humanity. The chief of these was the propagation of tar-water, for which, on account of its legendary properties, he developed a positive mania. Tar-water was the main subject of his great book, *Siris*, which he published in 1744—a most extraordinary work, starting from the nature and properties of his favourite beverage, and reaching splendid heights of metaphysical speculation. In 1752 his health failed, and he went to Oxford, where he lived for six months, dying quietly and without any pain in January, 1753. In all English literature there is scarcely another instance of a man who, by his perfect goodness, so fascinated everybody. George II, not an impressionable monarch, refused to accept his resignation of Cloyne; and all the wits and statesmen of his day seem to have felt the charm of his personality.

Berkeley's life at Cloyne.

His character.

As a philosopher, the place which he occupies is most distinguished; as a philosopher who combined literary style with his philosophy, his place, in English, is absolutely unique. His work divides itself into three periods. During the first of these he was in residence at Dublin, working out his famous theory of the phenomenal nature of matter. The foundation of his theory was laid in the study of Locke, but, in its superstructure, there is a wide divergence from Locke's incipient materialism. The whole aim of Berkeley's teaching was to establish a perpetual contact between the senses of man and the eternal and unthinkable—that is, in short, to break down material barriers between the spirit of man and God. There is a prevalent misapprehension, perhaps only natural, that Berkeley attacked the qualities and accidents of matter—its weight, hardness, etc.—but, as a matter of fact, his real position is, not that our touch or sight are delusions, but that the things which we touch and see are symbols of something spiritual and eternal. This naturally brought him into conflict with the materialists and deists, and the book of his second period, *Alciphron*, the set of dialogues written in Rhode Island and supposed to take place there, is primarily controversial, and is an attack upon the "minute philosophers" of the day. Shaftesbury and Mandeville are, with Berkeley, in the same boat; the educated scepticism of the one and the callous unbelief of the other, mutually repellent, are, to his ideal standard, equally detestable, the same thing under opposite names. Thirdly, in *Siris*, the doctrines of his early period are again stated; but he is now more completely under the influence of Plato; and the great value of the book lies in its magnificent rhapsodies of idealism, in which he approaches his master's

His philosophy.

His theory of the non-existence of matter.

"Alciphron" (1732).

"Siris" (1744): Berkeley's style.

style more nearly than any other philosopher. It is in *Siris*, that quaint expansion of an eccentricity into a metaphysical treatise, that we can lay aside the outer obscurities of Berkeley's philosophy, and recognise him as a master of English prose, unique in his own age and in his own kind of writing.

§ 12. Mandeville's other opponent, WILLIAM LAW, has been treated with very little consideration by posterity. He was a High Churchman and a nonjuror, and was therefore not much admired in his own day; while, in later years, he embraced a form of mysticism which, to men of his own school of thought, was incomprehensible, and is always likely to commend itself only to a very small minority. He was born at Kings Cliffe, on the Rutlandshire edge of Northamptonshire, where his father was a grocer. At Cambridge he became a fellow of Emmanuel, took Holy Orders, and was in residence till the year of great changes, 1714, when he was deprived of his fellowship. After this he seems to have lived a rather unsettled life until, some twelve years later, he became tutor to the father of Gibbon the historian. In 1729 he published his famous treatise, *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*. He returned to Emmanuel, during his stay with the Gibbons, as tutor to his pupil. When his pupil's father died he left the family's house at Putney and lived in Northamptonshire, first at Thrapston, and then at Kings Cliffe, where he passed the rest of his life in spiritual meditation and philanthropy. His household consisted of himself, Miss Hester Gibbon, who was a sister of his pupil, and Mrs. Hutcheson, a lady who had come under his spiritual influence. It was during this period that he attached himself to the doctrines of Jacob Behmen, the German mystic, and wrote his own mystical treatises. But, for the ordinary student of English literature, Law remains pre-eminently the author of the *Serious Call*, the finest devotional treatise in English since Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living*. In its style there is no fine rhetoric: Law wrote simply and directly, with an admirably restrained command of humour and satire. His recommendations for the "devout and holy life" are rigorous, for he was a stringent ascetic with a firm belief in his own asceticism; and, consequently, his manual, among books of discipline, takes a prominent place for austerity. Its great literary charm is its representation of various types of the religious and worldly life under the form of portraits; its appeal to the reader is therefore more direct and concrete. The contrasted characters of the two sisters, Flavia the worldling and Miranda the anchorite, are cases in point. It is remarkable that the book had a strong influence on three people so different as Dr. Johnson, John Wesley, and John Keble. At any rate, had this been Law's only work, it would have made his name. In the history of controversy he is chiefly remembered by his

William Law (1686–1761).

Connection between Law and the Gibbon family.

The "Serious Call" (1729).

Remarks (1724) on Mandeville's book, and his *Letters to the Bishop of Bangor* (1717–19). The *Letters* are fine specimens of controversial writing, indignant, intolerant with the just intolerance that springs from conviction, and models of dignified prose. Law was no great metaphysician; where philosophy was concerned, he was a reactionary; and he placed Locke, the materialists, and the deists under the same condemnation. But he was a man of unusual acuteness of observation; his mind worked rapidly and clearly; and, whatever the subject was on which he wrote he clothed it in the same vigorous, plain language—a style which, to-day, in spite of its accidental quaintnesses, has a curiously modern effect.

Law's place in controversy.

§ 13. Law can hardly be said to belong to this or any other period, so utterly does he stand by himself in the history of literature. Beyond the fact that he was the contemporary of Pope, Swift, and Addison, he has nothing in common with them. With LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU we leave metaphysics and theology and return to polite letters and Pope's coterie. Lady Mary's distinction is that of a letter-writer. She was the daughter of Evelyn Pierrepont, Duke and Earl of Kingston and Marquess of Dorchester—these titles, however, were accumulated at various times after her birth. As a child she was remarkably clever, a great reader and student, and probably owed more to her own private studies than to the irregular tuition of Bishop Burnet, for whom, before she came of age, she translated Epictetus' *Enchiridion* (1710). Her accomplishments were supplemented by her good looks, and, when she was only eight years old, the Kit-Cat club is said to have elected her a toast, to her intense delight. In 1712 she secretly married and eloped with Mr. Edward Wortley Montagu, a grave and saturnine diplomatist, with whom a fashionable beauty could have had little in common. She accompanied her husband, in 1716, on his embassy to the Porte, and described her travels over Europe and the East in those delightful letters, which were circulated in manuscript and not published till 1763, the year after her death. She was the first traveller who gave a familiar, picturesque, and animated account of Oriental society, and particularly of the internal life and manners of the harem in the seraglio, to which her sex and her high position gave her unusual facilities of access. She returned from her travels in 1718. In 1739 she separated, with mutual consent, from her husband, and went to Italy, where she lived till his death. Her own took place the year after at her town house in George Street, Hanover Square. The separation was due probably to the fact that she and her husband were totally unsuited, and not to any bitter quarrel; they continued to correspond politely, but never saw each other again. Her son

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU (1689–1762).

Her marriage and travels.

Her misfortunes and character.

was, however, the cause of some unhappiness to her: his talents were considerable, but the vices and eccentricities of his singular and adventurous career were those of a madman. Her daughter's affection, however, may have compensated for the trouble which her son gave her. Her nature was neither warm nor affectionate, and she looked her sorrows in the face with a philosophical equanimity; but she felt for her daughter all the tenderness that she could bestow, and wrote to her some of her most lively and amusing letters. Admirable common-sense, observation, vivacity, extensive reading without a trace of pedantry, and a pleasant tinge of half-playful sarcasm, are the distinguishing features of Lady Mary's correspondence. Her style is perfection; it has the simplicity and elegance of perfect breeding, and, at the same time, the ease of the thorough woman of the world. She is, of course, not always delicate—but delicacy was not the virtue of her age, and nothing in her career had encouraged it. But she had seen so much, had met so many remarkable persons, and had had such excellent opportunities of judging them, that she is always sensible and amusing. One naturally compares her letters with those of Madame de Sévigné, but the comparison is even more strikingly a contrast. Lady Mary had none of that intense and even morbid maternal affection which Madame de Sévigné shows in every line of her letters to Madame de Grignan, nor did she worship the Court with that adoration with which every writer of the Louis XIV epoch invested its fetich. In wit and animation, in the power of hitting off, by a few felicitous touches, a character or a scene, it is difficult to assign the palm of superiority. Lady Mary's intellect was unquestionably far higher, and her literary development was wider. She could reason and draw inferences where Madame de Sévigné could only gossip, although with the most charming prattle in the world. The successful introduction of inoculation for the small-pox is mainly to be attributed to Lady Mary's intelligence and courage. She had seen it practised in Turkey, and, knowing the excellent result, tried the experiment upon her own child, and with admirable constancy resisted the furious opposition of bigotry and intolerance to the bold innovation. She was at one time the intimate friend of Pope, and the object of his most ardent flattery; but a violent quarrel occurred between them which put an end to the friendship. Pope is supposed to have admired her with a superfluous warmth, and the lady to have received his advances with a contemptuous ridicule which transformed his ardour into the most bitter and persevering malignity. In addition to her letters, Lady Mary was the author of a small collection of miscellaneous poems which have the ease, regularity, and fluency distinctive of the lighter verse of the day, and are tinged

Her letters.

Compared with the letters of Madame de Sévigné.

Her originality.

Her friendship with Pope.

with a lax epicureanism, sometimes very happily expressed. One of the strongest contrasts between the social condition of England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is to be found in the comparison between the tone and topics of Mrs. Hutchinson's memoirs, and the gay, worldly, satirical letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Both the one and the other show us types of female character modified by the respective influences of the two so strongly contrasted epochs.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

A.—MINOR PROSE WRITERS.

(1.) ESSAYISTS, ETC.

EUSTACE BUDGELL (1685–1737), a cousin and friend of Addison, who obtained for him many important posts under Government. He contributed to *The Spectator* all those papers which are signed X., and was supposed to have assisted the deist Tindal in his momentarily notorious works. Budgell lost all his fortune in the South Sea bubble and in unsuccessful attempts to gain a seat in Parliament, and became a ruined man. He was accused, too, and with only too good reason, of having forged Tindal's will in his own favour. We find an allusion to this charge in Pope :—

> "Let Budgell charge low Grub Street on his quill,
> And write whate'er he pleased—except his will."

His circumstances at last became desperate, and he committed suicide, leaping from a boat at London Bridge. In his house was found a slip of paper on which was written—

> "What Cato did and Addison approved
> Cannot be wrong."

Budgell, from 1733 to 1735, published on his own account a weekly perio dical called *The Bee.*

JOHN HUGHES (1677–1720) contributed a few papers to *The Tatler*, *Spectator*, and *Guardian.* He also published some miscellaneous poems, a tragedy called *The Siege of Damascus* (1720), several translations from the French, and an edition of Spenser's works (1715).

MARY DE LA RIVIERE MANLEY (1672–1724), the daughter of Sir Roger Manley, Lieutenant-Governor of the castles of Jersey from 1667 to 1674, does not occupy a very respectable place in the literature of her age. Although probably more sinned against than sinning, she did not go out of the way to observe the ordinary proprieties of the *belles lettres.* She began her career as a dramatist (1696), and her first plays were well received. Her popularity, however, waned, and, falling into poverty, she adopted the trade of scandalous memoir writer. *The New Atalantis* (1709) was a bitter, disreputable, and amusing satire on the political and social leaders of the time, and brought her into an acquaintance with Swift, who handed over to her the editorship of *The Examiner.* She managed the paper from the middle of 1711 until 1713. It is satisfactory to know that her unhappy life ended more or less quietly ; a London alderman, named Barber, took compassion on her, and offered her a home in his house, where she spent her last days.

(2.) METAPHYSICIANS AND THEOLOGIANS.

SAMUEL CLARKE (1675–1729) was a native of Norwich, was educated at Caius College, Cambridge, and became chaplain to Bishop Moore of Norwich. His earliest work was

a translation of Rohault's *Physics* (1695), which he augmented two years later, revising it by comparison with the Newtonian philosophy. In 1701 he was presented to the living of Drayton, near Norwich; and, in 1704 and 1705, was Boyle lecturer. His lectures on *The Being and Attributes of God* and *The Obligations of Natural Religion* form his most important contribution to metaphysical literature. Very soon after delivering these he was appointed a royal chaplain and rector of St. James', Westminster. His treatise on *The Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity* (1712) caused some stir in Convocation. Clarke's views were distinctly of an Unitarian type; as a philosophical Low Churchman he was naturally attracted by the deism of his day; and his metaphysics, of course, had a strong influence on his theology. Perhaps a more fortunate contribution to philosophy was his correspondence with Leibnitz, in which he defended the Newtonian philosophy. This was published in 1717, the year after Leibnitz' death. Among his remaining works are his paraphrases of the Gospels (1701–2) and his seventeen sermons, partly metaphysical and partly practical (1724). In 1727 he refused to accept the mastership of the Mint. Although one cannot deny to Clarke the virtue of ability, he was not one of the great metaphysicians. His doctrine that the rule of virtue consists in the fitness of things, or in their "congruity of relation," which neglects the distinction and prior discernment of good things from bad, was condemned by Butler and later moralists as too limited and confined. His style is neither very simple nor very difficult; its tendency is to be plain and vigorous; it is, however, seldom more than mediocre.

BENJAMIN HOADLY (1676–1761), born at Westerham in Kent, and educated at Catharine Hall, Cambridge, was "a man of much motion and promotion," rector of St. Peter-le-Poor and Streatham, Bishop of Bangor (which he never visited) in 1715, of Hereford in 1721, of Salisbury in 1723, and of Winchester in 1734. As a Whig and latitudinarian, he achieved some notoriety; and his sermon on *The Nature of Christ's Kingdom*, preached before George I in 1717, raised about his ears the storm of the "Bangorian controversy." He was a friend and, to some extent, a disciple of Clarke; but his religious views were tainted by a greater secularity, and he unquestionably was one of those divines who did irreparable injury to the English Church during the Hanoverian period. Nevertheless, we must give him his due, and acknowledge that he acted withal sincerely. Moreover, his work happens to be quite readable. The controversy in which he was engaged was more than ephemeral; and he approached it with a certain humour and capacity for satire which was not always to be found in the controversial literature of his time. A notable instance of this is the ironical dedication to Pope Clement XI which he prefixed to Steele's *Account of the State of the Roman Catholic Religion* (1715)—a *jeu d'esprit*, which was the first manifesto of his views, and the immediate cause of his preferment.

NATHANIEL LARDNER (1684–1768), a Nonconformist divine, was the author of a very learned work on *The Credibility of Gospel History*, published between 1727 and 1757, and of a somewhat similar treatise entitled *A large Collection of Ancient, Jewish, and Heathen Testimonies to the Truth of the Christian Religion* (1764–7).

CHARLES LESLIE (1650–1722) was an Irish nonjuring clergyman and controversialist, who, after attacking the Quakers in a treatise called *The Snake in the Grass* (1696), followed it up with *A Short and Easy Method with the Deists* (1698). He lived abroad for some time with the Pretender. His voluminous works were published in London (1721) and reprinted at Oxford in 1832.

HUMPHREY PRIDEAUX (1648–1724), student of Christ Church, Oxford, and dean of Norwich, wrote *The Old and New Testaments Connected* (1716–18) and a book on *Tithes* (1710). His most interesting work, however, is contained in his letters to his friend Ellis, which are

full of gossiping details as to the Oxford life of his time. These were published by the Camden Society in 1875.

THOMAS SHERLOCK (1678-1761), the antagonist of Hoadly, was the son of William Sherlock, Master of the Temple (see p. 375), and succeeded his father in that post. In 1714 he became Master of Catharine Hall, Cambridge, where Hoadly, two years his senior, was fellow. The lives of the two ran in a curious parallel. Sherlock, as dean of Chichester, took a foremost part in the Bangorian controversy of 1717. He, like Hoadly, became Bishop of Bangor; he was Hoadly's successor at Salisbury; from Salisbury he was translated to London in 1748, and died in the same year as his old enemy. Sherlock was at once a High Churchman and a Hanoverian royalist; his spirituality was perhaps not great, but he was an eloquent speaker and wrote well. His work is composed of sermons and controversial treatises; and, beside the part which he took in the Bangorian controversy and the Boyle and Bentley quarrel, he wrote a book against the deists called *The Trial of the Witnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus* (1729).

MATTHEW TINDAL (1653?–1733) may be considered as the leader of the deists—that is to say, of the party whose scepticism was thoroughgoing. He is said to have turned Romanist under James II, but, later on, he developed a form of unbelief which found its practical expression in *Christianity as old as the Creation* (1730). Tindal had some claims to literary distinction, which were not shared by his contemporaries of the same way of thinking. The most notorious of these, JUNIUS JANUS, or, as he called himself, JOHN TOLAND (1670–1722), the author of *Christianity not Mysterious* (1696), was little more than a vigorous pamphleteer. The rationalism of these writers was principally destructive. The *Discourse of Freethinking* (1713) of ANTHONY COLLINS (1676–1729) is an *apologia* rather than a positive treatise, and WILLIAM WOLLASTON (1660–1724), in his *Religion of Nature Delineated* (1724), merely pointed out the way to the "free thought" of a later age.

WILLIAM WHISTON (1667–1752), of Clare College, Cambridge, was a mathematician of the school of Newton, and succeeded his master as Lucasian professor of mathematics. He was at first in Holy Orders, but was expelled from the Church on account of his Arian opinions, and, before his death, became a Baptist and espoused millenarian doctrines. His chief works were—*A New Theory of the Earth* (1696), an *Essay on the Revelation of St. John* (1706), *Sermons* (1709), *Primitive Christianity Revived* (1711–2), and *Memoirs* (1749–50).

(3.) HISTORIANS, ETC.

THOMAS CARTE (1686–1754) was the author of a *History of England* (1747-55), which came down to 1654, and of a *Life of James, Duke of Ormond*. He was a strong Jacobite.

LAURENCE ECHARD (1670?–1730), archdeacon of Stow and canon of Lincoln, was an extensive compiler and careful annalist. His histories of England (1707–20), Rome (1697–8), and the Church (1702), were considered valuable collections in their day, and several editions of the Ecclesiastical History have been published.

BASIL KENNETT (1674–1715) was educated at Oxford, and became English chaplain at Leghorn. He was the author of a book on Roman antiquities—*Romæ Antiquæ Notitia* (1696).

CONYERS MIDDLETON (1683–1750), of Trinity College, Cambridge, librarian of the University and Woodwardian professor of geology, is known as one of Bentley's chief opponents in his famous quarrel with the fellows of Trinity. Bentley is said to have been afraid of Middleton alone among all his foes. The ill-natured spite of the man is shown in the story that, when the University had deprived Bentley of his degree, Middleton addressed a letter to him with the superscription, "The Rev. Richard Bentley, *late* D.D." Middleton's chief work, by which he is now best known, is his *Life of Cicero* (1741), plagiarised

for the most part, from the Scottish historian of more than a century before, William Bellenden. His *Free Inquiry into the Miraculous Powers which are supposed to have existed in the Christian Church* (1748), which showed a very strong leaning to rationalism, created a great sensation, and was certainly a curious book to have been written by an Anglican clergyman. Middleton wrote a weighty, classical prose style which enjoyed a great contemporary fame. It is totally without ornament; at the same time, even to-day, it is lively and vigorous; and even its sternness and slight inclination, here and there, to stiffness, never prevents it from achieving its purpose and carrying home its author's meaning.

WILLIAM NICOLSON (1655–1727), Bishop of Carlisle from 1702 to 1718, then of Derry, and eventually Archbishop of Cashel, was a learned antiquarian, who wrote books on the *Border Laws* (1705) and the *Laws of the Anglo-Saxons*. From 1696 to 1724 he produced a catalogue of MSS. called *The English, Scottish, and Irish Historical Libraries*.

JOHN POTTER (1674?–1747) was born at Wakefield, educated at University College, Oxford, and eventually became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1737. He is best known for his work, *Archæologia Græca* (1697–8), which was for a long time the chief authority on Hellenic antiquities.

JOHN STRYPE (1643-1737), son of a refugee from Brabant, was educated at Catharine Hall, Cambridge, and took Holy Orders in the Church of England. He devoted himself to history and biography, and wrote lives of Cranmer (1694), Grindal (1710), Parker (1711), and Whitgift (1718); *Annals of the Reformation* (1709-31); and was editor (1724) of Stow's *Survey of London*, beside other works of historical and antiquarian interest. He died at Hackney at the age of ninety-four.

NICHOLAS TINDAL (1687–1774), the nephew of Matthew Tindal the deist, was the translator and continuator of Rapin's *History of England*. His translation was published between 1725 and 1731; the continuation appeared in 1744 and 1745. Rapin's work had been published in 1723.

B.—THE BOYLE AND BENTLEY CONTROVERSY.

This celebrated controversy, which has been alluded to more than once in the immediately preceding chapters, arose out of another upon the comparative merits of the ancient and modern writers. This dispute had its origin in France, where Fontenelle and Perrault claimed for the moderns a general superiority over the writers of antiquity. A reply to their arguments was published by Sir William Temple in his essay, *Of Ancient and Modern Learning* (1692). Sir William was nothing if not elegant; but his answer was puerile and exposed great credulity. Not content with pointing out the undoubted merits of the great writers of antiquity, he undervalued modern labours and discovery, and passed over Shakespeare, Milton, and Newton without mentioning their names.

Two years later a more accomplished and impartial writer entered the field. WILLIAM WOTTON (1666-1726) had been a boy of astonishing precocity, and had been admitted to Catharine Hall, Cambridge, when under ten years old. When he took his degree, at the age of thirteen, he was acquainted with twelve languages. In 1694 this young scholar brought out his *Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning*, in which, speaking with authority, he assigned to the ancients their real merits, and, at the same time, pointed out the superiority of the moderns in physical science.

These books formed the prelude to the real contest. Sir William Temple in his essay, among other arguments to prove the decay of humour, wit, and learning, had maintained "that the oldest books extant were still the best of their kind," and in proof of this assertion had cited Æsop's Fables and the Epistles of Phalaris. Temple's praise led to the publication of a new edition of Phalaris by the scholars

of Christ Church, Oxford (1695). Dean Aldrich was at the back of the scheme, but the nominal editor was Charles Boyle, a brother of Lord Orrery; and, in his preface, he inserted a bitter attack on the royal librarian, who had refused to lend him a MS. from the King's library beyond the proper time allowed.

Boyle's recriminations opened the real contest. The King's librarian was RICHARD BENTLEY (1662-1742), a rough Yorkshireman, who had been educated at Wakefield school and St. John's College, Cambridge, and was already regarded as the finest classical scholar of the time. He had been tutor in Stillingfleet's family, and had been appointed royal librarian in 1694. He retaliated upon Boyle two years after the appearance of Phalaris. To the second edition of Wotton's *Reflections* (1697) he added a dissertation, in the form of letters to the author, proving that the author of Phalaris' Epistles was not the Sicilian tyrant, but some sophist of a later age. Sir William Temple, who had been greatly annoyed by Wotton's book, was still more angry with Bentley's essay; and Swift, who was then living in Temple's house, took up the cudgels for his patron in *The Battle of the Books*, in which he ridiculed Bentley in the most ludicrous manner. The satire was not published, however, till 1704.

Temple's part in the controversy is a side issue. The centre of indignation was at Christ Church. Bentley's attack was considered an affront to the whole college; and it was resolved, at once and for ever, to crush the audacious assailant. All the strength of the college was enlisted in the contest, but the chief task of the reply was undertaken by Atterbury, who succeeded Aldrich as dean some years later. His assistants were George Smalridge, who succeeded him in the deanery, Robert Friend, afterwards headmaster of Westminster School, his brother John Friend, and Anthony Alsop. "In point of classical learning," wrote Bentley's biographer, 'the joint stock of the confederacy bore no proportion to that of Bentley; their acquaintance with several of the books upon which they comment appears only to have begun on that occasion, and sometimes they are indebted for their knowledge of them to their adversary; compared with his boundless erudition, their learning was that of school-boys, and not always sufficient to preserve them from distressing mistakes. It may be doubtful whether Busby himself, by whom every one of the confederate band had been educated, possessed knowledge which could have qualified him to enter the lists in such a controversy." But they made up for their deficient learning by their wit and raillery, and when their book appeared (1698) it was received with extravagant applause. It bore the pretentious title of *Dr. Bentley's Dissertations on the Epistles of Phalaris and the Fables of Æsop examined by the Honourable Charles Boyle, Esq.*, which has usually been abbreviated into *Boyle against Bentley*. Boyle had, however, very little if any share in the composition of the work. It was generally supposed that Bentley was silenced and crushed. Public opinion was entirely on the side of the Christ Church scholars, whose work represented good breeding and humour. Bentley, on the other hand, had the reputation of a *gauche*, ill-bred person, with no manners and a rough-shod wit which naturally made more enemies than friends; and, for such an individual to set his scholarship up against the prestige of a great foundation like Christ Church, was considered an impertinence.

It was expected that Bentley would bow his head and say nothing. However, he had very little respect for ancient foundations and honourable disputants; and, in 1699, he surprised his foes with *Bentley against Boyle—A Dissertation upon the Epistles of Phalaris: with an answer to the objections of the Hon. Charles Boyle, by Richard Bentley, D.D.* In the history of controversy there has been no more striking success. The book was no bitter retort; it did not attempt to make its adversaries look ridiculous by its witty ingenuity alone. It was

a serious tribute to scholarship, confuting the Christ Church dons on almost every point, direct and indirect, which they had raised; and it won, although not all at once, a well-merited success. There was no official answer: the reply had been so complete and crushing that it was useless to attempt a rejoinder. The professors of polite letters who disliked Bentley's laborious scholarship, the Tories who disliked his Whiggism, agreed that he had triumphed and that there was nothing more to be said.

As a mere quarrel, the controversy itself was purely ephemeral and hopelessly one-sided. Its place in English literary history is, however, very important. No controversy over a disputed authorship would, in our own time, occupy the public attention so thoroughly. Then, however, opinion on such matters was very different, and a discussion in which men of birth and distinction, like Charles Boyle and Sir William Temple, took part, was sure to enlist the sympathies of educated people, and to command an interest outside the field of mere scholarship. The question of politics and good manners was more important than learning. We must not suppose that Bentley's victory was immediate: his theories won their way little by little. But, in the end, his profound knowledge of his subject completely turned the scales of public feeling on this point. It represented the triumph of accurate scholarship over polite smatterers; it effected a revolution in the learning of the next century, and, consequently, altered the whole tone of its literature. The scholarship of the seventeenth century and the age of Anne, with all its classical veneer, was a very poor affair. The writers of history, for instance, went about their work with no critical discrimination; they were mere compilers, and, with little sense of taste or style, were dull and vague. Their histories and antiquarian dissertations are now obsolete. With Bentley came a general renaissance, evident, primarily, in the Universities, and consequently in literature and learning throughout the kingdom. Its direct influence is seen in scholars like Porson, in the growth of Shakespearean criticism under Steevens and Malone, in historians like Hume, Gibbon, and Robertson, in Johnson's English Dictionary. And, indirectly, there is a deeper note in all the writing of the coming age: satire gives way to humour; superficial observation to the real study of character in the great novelists; in short, we pass to a wider and deeper humanity. That Bentley's criticisms on Phalaris, acting as they did upon the very centres of English education, were in a great measure responsible for this change, it would be impossible to deny.

So far as the actual combatants were concerned, their later energy manifested itself in other directions. Sir William Temple did not live to see *Bentley against Boyle*, but died with his belief in the authenticity of Phalaris and the superiority of the ancients unshaken. Atterbury introduced confusion into Christ Church, and Smalridge had to soothe things down afterwards. Bentley himself, as Master of Trinity, was for forty-two years the cause and centre of a humiliating controversy between himself and the fellows of the college, which at times assumed the form of open war. This, however, belongs to the history of Cambridge, and not to English literature. His further contributions to scholarship were a *Horace* (1711), a *Terence* (1726), and an edition of *Paradise Lost* (1732). These have been superseded in the course of time; but the dissertations on Phalaris have a more lasting interest. "The book," said Monk in his *Life of Bentley*, "will long continue to be in the hands of all educated persons, as long as literature maintains its hold in society." It is to be feared that, of late years, in spite of the contributions of Dr. Jebb and others to the literature of Bentley, educated people have rather lost sight of his chief work; but that does not alter its importance or value, or excuse its neglect.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE GREAT NOVELISTS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

§ 1. Evolution of Prose Fiction. The Romance and the Novel. § 2. DANIEL DEFOE: his life; his political writings. § 3. His narratives: *Robinson Crusoe* and *Captain Singleton*. § 4. *Colonel Jack*, *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana*. § 5. *Journal of the Plague Year*. *Memoirs of a Cavalier*. Death of Defoe. § 6. SAMUEL RICHARDSON: his life. *Pamela*. § 7. *Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison*. § 8. HENRY FIELDING: his life. § 9. Character of his work. § 10. *Jonathan Wild*, *Joseph Andrews*, *Tom Jones*, *Amelia*. § 11. TOBIAS SMOLLETT: his life. § 12. His novels: *Humphrey Clinker*. His poetry. § 13. Life of LAURENCE STERNE. § 14. His style and humour. *Tristram Shandy* and the *Sentimental Journey*. § 15. OLIVER GOLDSMITH: his life. § 16. His writings. § 17. Minor novelists. Temporary decline of the novel.

§ 1. To say that prose fiction came into being during the eighteenth century is hardly true. The art of Richardson and Fielding, like everything else, follows a line of evolution. The English novel, properly speaking, sprang rather suddenly into life; at first sight, there is no evidence of any transition leading to it from the rather indeterminate forms of fiction that were its predecessors. And, as a matter of fact, what transition there is, actually is a reaction. The prose fiction with which the Englishman of the sixteenth and seventeenth century amused himself does not answer to our modern idea of light literature. Sidney's *Arcadia*, Lyly's *Euphues*, are landmarks in the history of English prose; but the first was a collection of impossible episodes strung together on a thread which it requires the utmost courtesy to call a plot; the other was the merest excuse for a display of style, and needed no imagination, save in so far as the author had to coin his own words. The kind of romance to which Lodge's *Rosalynde* and Greene's *Pandosto* belong combined incident of the Sidneian type with the prose of *Euphues*. Moreover, books like these appealed entirely to the educated and courtly taste of the few. Even the more popular compilations, like Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*, which borrowed their stories wholesale from the foreign novelists, managed, in the borrowing, to miss the

Evolution of prose fiction.

Elizabethan romance.

characteristics which, to modern readers, give Boccaccio and the rest their lively interest; they extracted the romantic element without catching any reflection of the observation and experience of their originals. Philosophical romances, like the *Utopia*, do not count; they have no more to do with prose fiction than the charming setting of a Platonic dialogue; their romantic envelope is merely the sugar coating of their serious intention.

Dramatic character of the eighteenth-century novel.

The fact is that prose fiction, in those days, was the merest byway of literature. It was like a country lane on a misty morning; the travellers who journeyed along it saw nothing on either side or in front. The great highway of the Elizabethan era was the drama; and there the origin of the eighteenth-century novel is to be sought. Richardson and Fielding adapted the art of the dramatists to the principle of story-telling; they studied, each in his own way, the dramatic problems of plot and character; they made the reader a spectator, as it were, of a grand and involved stage-play; and, finally, they conducted their drama into intelligible and reasonable surroundings. Hitherto, the characters and scenery of prose fiction had been impossible in real life; there had been tacit agreement that the romance had nothing to do with the "common and unclean."

Unreality of romance.

English fiction of the later Stewart period had consisted of translations from, or imitations—like Roger Boyle's *Parthenissa* (1654)—of, the interminable novels of D'Urfé, La Calprenède, and Mademoiselle de Scudéri. The *Grand Cyrus*, the *Astrée*, and the *Princesse de Clèves* had roamed on heights inaccessible to ordinary mortals, beside princes who were paragons of manners and delicacy, and talked in the finest strain of moral aphorism to ladies as accomplished as themselves. This sort of writing had been borrowed by the French from the Castilian novelists and, of course, from the arch-sinner of heroic romance, Montemayor, whose chivalrous extravagances had, as we have seen, an earlier influence on Sidney. Just as Montemayor and his companion paladins of fiction had been ridiculed in *Don Quixote*, so the voluminous French writers were satirised in Scarron's *Roman Comique*. But the death-blow to this class of fiction came, not from the destructive criticism of the comic romance, but from the positive growth of a new art, whose object was the dramatic imitation of real life. The English novelists, in short, cast aside the ordinary traditions of romantic scenery and princely heroes, and worked on the actual material they found ready to hand. They saw the dramatic element in common life, and used it. Fielding disliked Richardson, and Richardson did not understand Fielding; but this was a minor difference of temperament. In the main point of their art they were at one. They were both students of

The novel as a new art, distinct from the romance.

human life; they both saw, through different glasses, its intense interest; and the common effect of their work was to give the novel a place beside the drama as a reflector of life, to give the art of Shakespeare a new direction. They substituted the novel of manners and character for the romance of adventure; and we shall see how, when romance revived in the hands of Scott, it received an essential impulse from their work. To-day there are obvious differences between the novel and the romance, which are increased by the artificial terms of criticism. But, when all is said and done, when the romantic method has been contrasted with the realistic, it is found that they stand on a common platform—the dramatic interest of life. Their differences are only incidental. But the difference between the eighteenth-century novelists and their predecessors was fundamental and decisive: their art was a reaction from the unnatural; they made fiction, up to their time the vehicle of the unreal, the mirror of reality; and, in so doing, they were the cause of the most important of all literary revolutions.

Importance of the eighteenth-century novelists in literary history.

§ 2. There were, however, among the writers of the later half of the seventeenth century a few who, if they did nothing as novelists in the proper sense, at all events did their best to improve the art of narrative. Mrs. Aphra Behn had written a few romances which, although not masterpieces, were unusually good for the age, and RICHARD HEAD (1637?–1686?) had, in Charles II's reign, written a novel of adventure called *The English Rogue* (1665).

Later Stewart fiction.

But a more skilled master of narrative was DANIEL DEFOE. Defoe has received the title of the founder of the English novel, principally on account of the admirable tale which is known to every Englishman —*Robinson Crusoe*. But, in reality, with or without Defoe, the novel would have had an independent existence. His position is unique and difficult to define. He was by no means a master of his own language; no one wrote English more loosely or with less deliberate sense of style. On the other hand, he always knew what he was writing about, and brought to his fictions an accuracy and imagination which, combined, rendered him a master in realistic description. As a realist, to use the modern phrase, he has no rival in any language, and on this account he deserves a place among the novelists.

DANIEL DEFOE (1661-1731).

Defoe's life is little more than a *résumé* of the political history of his time. From first to last he was mixed up, not too creditably, with politics; in the eyes of his contemporaries, he was the able, versatile pamphleteer. His father was a butcher in the City, and, being a dissenter, intended that his son should enter the Nonconformist ministry. But, although Defoe continued all his life a staunch Whig and dissenter, and, in his closing years, wrote religious

Life of Defoe.

manuals which were popular for many years after his death, he decided to go into trade. He was by no means a man of business, and, as hose-factor and tile-maker, he was a failure. It is probable that he neglected everything to follow the course of politics. As early as 1685 he joined the Duke of Monmouth's rebellion, and had to go abroad to save his neck. Later on, in 1703, when Parliament was persecuting the sectarians, he ruined a flourishing business in pantiles by writing a satire called *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*. With that admirable skill of imagination which, in after years, enabled him to write *Robinson Crusoe*, he adopted the tone of a violent Tory, and urged the Government to resort to the stake, the pillory, and the halter. At first the "high-flying" party, as they were called, applauded this vigorous proposal; but, when it gradually leaked out that the poem—which, by the way, is singularly devoid of poetry—was a burlesque on their own attitude, their fury knew no bounds. Defoe was thrown into prison, and his brick-kilns at Tilbury went to ruin. He was liberated in 1704 by Harley's influence, and, from that time forward, devoted himself to political service. In prison he had begun to publish a Whig newspaper called the *Review*, and his chief business after his release was its continuation. At the same time he was active in many other ways, writing occasional pamphlets, investigating marvels, and generally taking an interest in everything that was going on round him. It is impossible to lose sight of the fact that this man, who, on the surface, was so bluff and honest, condescended, in the service of his party, to the most unworthy means, and for many years acted as the worst kind of press reptile, insinuating himself, in the interest of the Whigs, and by false pretences, into the control of Tory newspapers. This fact in itself proves nothing. Defoe was one of the lower circle of journalists whose methods were consistently underhand, who had to serve unscrupulous and corrupt ministries and, as a matter of course, do their dirty work. But any student of Defoe will detect, in all his work and life, a preference for duplicity and an indifference to right and wrong which agreed very ill with his religious profession. He never gained caste among his contemporaries. Pope, Swift, and the great Tory society of letters looked down on him as a poor scribbler. But the Whigs employed him in important political services, sending him, for example, on a confidential mission to Edinburgh at the time of the Union. If we put aside his unquestionable dishonesty, the bulk of his political writing which remains to us is straightforward and practical in tone. Its style is essentially plain and homely, the style of a popular writer whose pen may be called into action at any moment. It lacks humour, but for this want it compensates by a superfluity of shrewdness. In all his minor and practical writings—his account of Great Britain, for example,

His political journalism.

Style of his political writing.

and his projects for the improvement of London—he shows a remarkable foresight which, at times, amounts to the gift of prophecy. Swift, who, as a prose writer, is so immeasurably Defoe's superior, had nothing of Defoe's fertility in practical matters. In practice, Defoe had failed as a tradesman: theoretically, no one understood trade better or wrote so convincingly with the pen of a keen-witted, far-sighted man of business. This, with his unrivalled power of throwing dust in his readers' eyes, is his prevailing literary characteristic; and, side by side with his faculty for deceiving other people, goes his faculty for deceiving himself, and believing that he was an honest man while he was playing the part of a rogue.

His literary characteristics.

§ 3. Defoe's books and occasional pamphlets reach an appalling number—probably, if we had everything he wrote, to between three and four hundred separate publications. At present, we have access to something like two hundred and fifty; and, from this number, the narratives claim the first and, indeed, from a literary point of view, the only place. They all have the same characteristics. They profess to be autobiographies; they are related with the utmost attention to circumstantial detail, and with the same deliberate appearance of verisimilitude; and they are put forward with an intention of morality which is strictly modified by their author's evident respect for worldly prosperity. The most famous of them all was, so far as its publication is concerned, the earliest—*Robinson Crusoe*, the three parts of which appeared in 1719 and 1720. Defoe's political career was, at this time, a thing of the past, and he was living with his family—his wife was dead—at Stoke Newington. There can be very little doubt that, in the construction of his tale, Defoe employed the information which he had obtained some years previously from a sailor named Alexander Selkirk. This adventurer had been marooned by his captain on the deserted island of Juan Fernandez, where he lived for some years in complete solitude, becoming little more than a savage and losing the use of language, until he was eventually taken off the island by the same captain who had landed him there. He gradually recovered his speech and civilisation, and became the owner of a contemporary reputation. There is proof positive that Defoe, whose indefatigable curiosity led him to every new marvel, met and conversed with him at a house in Bristol; and it is probable that out of this interview came the suggestion for *Robinson Crusoe*. The story—or rather, succession of incidents—is well known, and all that is necessary to discuss here is the reason for its popularity. The apparent truth of the narrative is visible at once. Defoe loses himself utterly in Crusoe. There is no reference to himself even as the editor of these adventures; the narrative belongs entirely to Crusoe, and it is very doubtful whether the great majority of

Defoe's narratives.

1. "*Robinson Crusoe*" (1719).

those who have read the book know or care anything at all about Defoe. Secondly, the adventures are remarkable in nothing save the fact that they take place under exceptional circumstances; they are never so extraordinary that we doubt their probability. Crusoe is not a particularly clever or ingenious man, with impeccable sagacity and forethought; his wit and readiness are of the average kind, and he succeeds and fails just where the average man would do the same. On these premises, the success of the book is obvious: it has achieved the very difficult triumph of pleasing everybody, from the unlearned and ignorant to the professional critic. It is, however, so essential to our childhood, and the impressions which it leaves are so strong and lasting, that we seldom return to it when we are more capable of appreciating the art which has made it part of our own experience. We have sympathised with every detail of the raft-making, the fortification of Crusoe's dwelling-place, the circumnavigation of the island, the fishing, the turtle-catching, and the corn-planting; we are become part owners of the cave, the dog, cat, and parrots; we have felt Crusoe's thrill at the sight of the footprint in the sand, and we have taken our share in the possession of Friday. It is, at all events, Defoe's fault that we have forgotten the author in our recognition of his method.

Sequels to "Crusoe" (1719–20).

Robinson Crusoe succeeded at once, and its success produced the vastly inferior second and third parts. The moment that the solitude of the island is invaded by other strangers than Friday, the charm is half gone; and, unless our youthful instincts are controversial, Crusoe's appearance as a religious disputant is hardly welcome. Defoe's object was to amuse, not to instruct; and when, in the sequel, he dragged in a lean moral by its hair, it was by an unhappy afterthought. There can be no doubt that the continuation of *Robinson Crusoe* is surpassed by *Captain Singleton*, a curious narrative, which was published in 1720. In this life of a very flagitious pirate and filibuster, Defoe obviously inculcates the moral that such desultory occupations lead to an unhappy state of affairs; but, in the interest with which he follows his hero's performances, he occasionally leaves his intention to shift for itself. Nobody has ever taken warning either from the fact that Robinson Crusoe neglected the advice of his father, or that the less famous Singleton engaged in a series of dubious adventures which led him across the continent of Africa. Students of modern exploration will find in *Captain Singleton* a very astonishing piece of prophecy. Defoe, in his projects for hospitals and asylums and street improvements, never went quite so far as in this piece of imaginary exploration. It is certainly the highest proof of his imaginative power that this middle-class pamphleteer, in his prosaic residence at Stoke Newington, should have anticipated with so great a measure

"Captain Singleton" (1720).

of correctness the discoveries of Speke, Burton, Livingstone, and Stanley.

§ 4. These works of fiction came out very rapidly. In 1719 *Robinson Crusoe*, which had probably been written at intervals during a long period, was published. In August of the same year came its second part; and, in 1720, the third part of *Crusoe*, *Captain Singleton*, the *Memoirs of a Cavalier*, and *Duncan Campbell*, in which Defoe, a lover of the supernatural, tried to foist some outrageous stories of a Highland clairvoyant on the public. In 1722, in addition to the *Journal of the Plague Year*, he published *Colonel Jack* and *Moll Flanders*, which, with *Roxana* (1724), constitute a trio of very extraordinary and not altogether profitable narratives. Colonel Jack is a portentous rascal, with no regard for the distinctions of property or affection for anyone but himself; while, of the morality of Mrs. Flanders and Roxana, the second of whom moved in high circles and rejoiced in the well-sounding name of Mademoiselle de Beleau, the less said the better. Each book was superficially intended as a deterrent from vice; and it must be owned that the leading characters suffer amazing reverses; but, in the end, a smug repentance leads to an old age full of good works, and this ultimate conversion is so inevitable that the moral purpose of the books is blunted. Moreover, the two cardinal points, which have already been mentioned, of Defoe's art and morality, are only too visible here. In the first place, the prosperity and adversity of the three criminals (for they are hardly less) is measured from a purely commercial standpoint; their compunction is greater as their pockets are emptier. Secondly, Defoe's obvious delight in surrounding his narrative with an unassailable mass of correct detail brings us so nearly into acquaintance with these rogues that we share in their misdeeds as we shared in Crusoe's adventures, and, in our sympathy with their fortunes and reverses, lose our sense of right and wrong. Add to this the circumstance that pious observations positively tremble on the tongues of Colonel Jack and the two ladies; that, for every crime and error, they have their casuistry pat and well-ordered; and we are bound to confess that the conflict between piety and the commercial instinct in Defoe's own breast spoiled his excellent purpose in these books. These people are quite bad enough without hypocrisy; their duplicity and self-deception make us doubt their eventual repentance; and, with this doubt resting on them, their stories absolutely lose any suspicion of morality or excellent intention. On the other hand, it may be said that Defoe, in venturing into this sordid company with so resolute a foot, anticipated the naturalistic method, as it is called, of modern writers by more than a century. *Colonel Jack* is, to a certain extent, a narrative of adventure and travel, like *Crusoe* or *Captain Singleton*; *Moll*

Publication of the narratives.

2. *"Colonel Jack" and "Moll Flanders"* (1722); *"Roxana"* (1724).

Naturalism of these narratives.

Flanders, on the other hand, is a study of life as coarse in grain and as minute in detail as one of Hogarth's pictures. Still, it is little more than a narrative like the rest; the changes and chances of Mrs. Flanders' life pass before us in a vivid procession, but with no more of the dramatic quality than we usually expect from an autobiography. In *Roxana* we have more promising material. Like the readers of the *Grand Cyrus*, we may look for something more from courts and high society. And, although *Roxana* is the most unequal of all the books—for the heroine is occasionally very dull and prosy, and has not a tithe of Mrs. Flanders' impulsive warm-heartedness—it is, at the same time, the nearest to the threshold of the novel, and contains at least one situation in which Defoe clearly saw a dramatic possibility. These minor narratives—all of a very respectable length—have not the perfection of *Robinsoe Crusoe*, but they are of infinite inportance in the evolution of the novel.

Dramatic interest of "Roxana."

§ 5. A third group remains, dealing with actual history. Defoe was not content with making a list of facts and dates, with more or less dreary comments; he had to pose as an actual eye-witness. The *Journal of the Plague Year* (1722) was long accounted a contemporary description of the horrors which befell London in Defoe's infancy; and it is amazing that anyone who had not been an actual eye-witness of the scourge should have written about it with so much veracity. The *Journal* is little more than an ingenious romance composed upon a few well-known facts, and coloured by a lurid horror which probably represents the impression that Defoe, as a little boy, had gathered from the spectacle; to treat it as an historical document is unsafe, although not altogether unreasonable. Here, too, the dramatic side of things seems to have caught Defoe's fancy, and in this comparatively short work there is perhaps more of the art of fiction, as we understand it, than in the rest of his books put together. No one, however, could accuse the *Memoirs of a Cavalier* (1720) of this virtue. In its accounts of the Thirty Years' War and the Civil War in England there is a dry, hard attention to bare facts which gives it the air of a blue-book. The sudden appearance of these memoirs seems to have aroused no suspicion. The Cavalier even received an identity. However, later on, when Defoe's ingenious impostures were traced to their real author, he received with them the credit for other narratives of less value, and particularly for a very dull set of military memoirs, known as *The Adventures of Captain Carleton*. Even now, these books serve to show that, if he himself had been nowhere near these battlefields, he could see the battles with his own eyes and miss no important detail. Defoe's imagination was not picturesque; it was photographic; and of this variety of imagination it remains the chief example. Of

3. *Historical narratives.* *"Journal of the Plague Year"* (1722).

"Memoirs of a Cavalier" (1720).

the rest of his work—of the *New Voyage round the World* (1725), *The Political History of the Devil* (1726), and his ghost-story of Mrs. Veal and Mrs. Bargrave (1706), which continued for years to be a successful hoax, and was added, as an appendix, to enliven the otherwise sterile surface of *Drelincourt on Death*—there is here no space to write. His genius was not of a very high order, but it was genius; and, with all its irregularity and suspicious versatility, it was wonderfully successful. His own life ended, if not miserably, at least unhappily. In 1729 he left his house in Stoke Newington and hid himself near Greenwich—for what reason is not exactly known, but it is thought that he was out of his mind. His family discovered him; but for the next two years he lived apart from them, and died at a house in Ropemaker's Alley, Moorfields.

Remaining work.

Death of Defoe.

§ 6. The emotions and shades of temperament which, in Defoe's long narratives, had received the very slightest treatment, were the object chosen for analysis by SAMUEL RICHARDSON. With all the faults of his work, it must be confessed that he brought an entirely original element into literature. He had come to London in his youth from a remote Derbyshire village, where he had written love-letters for the girls of the neighbourhood; and, for the greater part of his life, he was a busy printer. The House of Commons appointed him printer of their journals. In 1754 he became Master of the Stationers' Company; and, in 1760, when he had reaped the reward of his books, he purchased a half share in the lucrative patent office of law-printer to the King. His three great novels were *Pamela* (2 vols. 1740), *Clarissa Harlowe* (7 vols. 1747–8), and *Sir Charles Grandison* (7 vols. 1753). In his old age he retired to a pleasant house at Parson's Green, where he reigned over a little knot of female worshippers, receiving their flattery and playing the part of tame cat to admiration. He died at length of apoplexy. As may be imagined, he was timid, sensitive, and effeminate; and these points in his character are amply proved by the remains of his correspondence.

SAMUEL RICHARDSON (1689–1761).

Pamela was written almost by accident. Richardson, as we have seen, had been always a letter-writer; and, in 1739, when he was fifty years old, he was asked by the booksellers, Rivington and Osborne, to produce a manual of correspondence to serve as a model for illiterate people. In his desire to give his book a moral flavour, he began to cast the letters into the form of a story which he intended to serve as a warning to young servants; and so, gradually abandoning his original purpose, he wrote *Pamela*. The story has its centre in a young girl of great beauty and innocence who, on her mistress' death, is exposed to temptation from the lady's son and heir, and eventually, after resisting his numerous allurements and persecutions, leads him

"Pamela" (1740): its origin and plot.

to entertain proposals of marriage and becomes his bride. It must be owned that this happy arrangement is matured as much by Pamela Andrews' machinations as by her lover's ardour, and that the morality of the book, which, during the early stages of the affair, is unexceptionable, is injured by the growth of self-consciousness in the heroine. At the same time, it cannot be denied that Richardson showed considerable knowledge of his heroine's heart; and, if her trying experience is her education in cunning and vulgarity, this, with so ignorant a girl, is at least probable. In Pamela's union of principle with self-interest we see in Richardson something of that business instinct which, in Defoe's narratives, went so far to spoil the ostensible moral. *Pamela* is, in consequence, a thoroughly *bourgeois* novel, and could have won lasting popularity only among a class whose sympathies, keenly alive to the heroine's trials and virtue, were blunt as regarded her ability to take care of herself. The later history of the book has proved this conclusively; but, after its publication, it was read generally and generally admired. Its effect, however, upon the more educated class is seen in its satiric sequel, Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*. As the work of a tradesman of little education, who had served no regular apprenticeship to his art, *Pamela* is, nevertheless, a wonderful production; and we cannot be surprised that a novel which, in addition to its freshness of form, showed so great a command of pathetic emotion, exhausted five editions in one year and became one of the most famous books of its century.

Contrasted elements in "Pamela."

The method which Richardson used for his story in this and his two succeeding novels has its merits and its defects. To make the characters of a novel tell their own story in a series of letters is, no doubt, of great advantage to an author's reputation. He can identify himself successively with each one, and so describe their emotions and shades of feeling subjectively and with a personal insight. On the other hand, within these limits, the evolution of the story is very slow, minute, and painful; and the improbable length and detail of each letter, which must necessarily give the reader his essential understanding of the plot, causes an insurmountable difficulty. But the fact remains that in these advantages and drawbacks consists the peculiar genius of Richardson. He had no faculty of objective description; and the virtue of his work consists in his creation of character by slow and delicate touches of personal revelation. In short, the realism of *Pamela*, its intense concentration upon ordinary human beings instead of fictitious and unlikely ideals of chivalry and heroism, is due to the method of its composition; and Richardson, in selecting a mode of story-telling which is intrinsically improbable, selected the only method compatible with his genius.

Richardson's method of story-telling: its suitability to his genius.

§ 7. *Clarissa Harlowe* is incontestably Richardson's master-

piece. The interest of the story, the variety of the characters, their truth to life, the artful conduct of the plot to the catastrophe, and the intense and almost intolerable pathos of Clarissa's misfortunes and death, give it not merely the highest place in Richardson's work, but an unique position in fiction. It is the story of a young lady who falls a victim to the profligacy and treachery of a libertine; and, although Richardson, both by his natural disposition and his circumstances, knew far more of women than of men, his rake, Robert Lovelace, in whom the good elements of beauty and talent are so indissolubly at one with a complete and well-nigh diabolical corruption, is the most finished portrait of a villain in literature—entirely natural and credible, the archetype of all the gay and unprincipled deceivers who have appeared since his time with more or less success. In so pitiful a story, the prevailing tone is sombre and mournful. Lovelace goes about his work with a concentrated heat of passion unmixed with levity. Clarissa, pure amid her injuries, suffers with all the agonies of Otway's tragic heroines. Indeed, the great fault of the book is that, in her pains and remorse and the calm of her dying sorrow, she is too like the ladies of post-Restoration tragedy; the violence of her injuries and sufferings is morbidly sentimental in its effect. The way in which Richardson works up to his climax, his accumulation of a thousand imperceptible little touches, the Dutch minuteness of his painting, convey an artistic impression which cannot be derived from Otway, and still less from the funereal rhapsodies of *The Mourning Bride* and *The Fair Penitent*; but the very art of this progression of catastrophes enhances that sickliness of tone which is distinctive of *Clarissa* and separates it from other English novels. In the hands of Fielding and his great successors, the novel assumed its national character; it revolted from the cultivation of sentiment, and became robust, callous, intolerant of affectation—in a word, supremely English; and, consequently, the number of English novels which have been recognised as masterpieces all over Europe is very small. But, in *Clarissa*, Richardson gave a picture, not of national manners, but of human character generally; he went to the springs of human feeling, and neglected the outer particulars of race and custom. As a natural result, the reputation of the novel, while it declined somewhat in England, grew all over Europe; and, in France, above all other countries, its sentimentality—which, if unhealthy, is the reverse of despicable—had, and still retains, a most astonishing influence. Few French authors of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries have stinted their tribute of praise to *Clarissa*, or have left their pages unstained by its tears; and no novelist, perhaps, was more indebted to the immortal book than Balzac, the most uni-

"Clarissa Harlowe" (1747–8).

Sentimentality of the book.

Its European influence,

especially in France.

versally read of all European masters of fiction. In his heroines, Eugénie Grandet, Ursule Mirouët, the hapless Madame de Mortsauf in *Le Lys dans la Vallée*, we follow the track of Clarissa; and the excess of sentiment thus engendered is clearly seen in the character of Adeline Hulot, who, to save her worthless husband, rushes upon an immoral compromise with an exaggerated self-abandonment worthy of Otway's Monimia and Belvidera. Even his less virtuous heroines, in their questionable careers, are full of false compunctions and debates of passion, and emulate the delicate sorrows of Clarissa while pursuing the path of Lovelace.

"Sir Charles Grandison" (1753): its drawbacks and exaggerations.

Sir Charles Grandison, too, has been more popular in France than in England—for the plain reason that the fine sentiments and lofty courtesy of its hero have been regarded, by his own nation, as ludicrously overdrawn; while, outside England, these exaggerations have been more leniently criticised. Sir Charles is the pink of ethical perfection, the man of *ton* who has retained his heart and his religion. In any case, so admirable a creature would be difficult to draw; and Richardson, who, in his picture of a servant, had succeeded tolerably, and, in drawing a young lady of ordinary rank, had achieved a triumph, was manifestly incapable of this third portrait. He had seen nothing of good society, and was totally ignorant of the manners, thought, and feeling of the fashionable world; and very naturally he imagined that ordinary virtues and vices were, in higher circles of life than his own, magnified and embellished. For a novelist whose art possessed, among its essential good qualities, truth to life, this adventure among the aristocracy was fatal. He did not, indeed, rely entirely upon imperfect guess-work, for it is said that he asked one of his more exalted admirers to criticise his work and verify its lofty atmosphere. However, she found so many errors and inconsistencies that he abandoned in despair the hope of correcting them, and the work appeared as it is—the laughable picture of a solemn grandee eternally bowing and hand-kissing in the company of a bevy of ladies, all of whom are consumed by their adoration of his perfections. The style is a perpetual quest of fine words, and the result is unavoidably stiff and laboured. Sir Charles and the heroine, Miss Harriet Byron, whom Richardson intended to represent as models of all the virtues, are insupportable prigs; and, through the whole tedious length of the novel, the only persons with whom we thoroughly sympathise are the fortunate possessors of a few ordinary imperfections. Clementina della Porretta, for instance, escapes from the unnatural scene by going mad; and, in describing her despair and madness, Richardson reaches his highest level in the book. But, as a whole, *Sir Charles Grandison* is a great error. Its tedious prolixity and its author's fondness for long and minute description—in which he again resembles Balzac—

are illustrated by Hazlitt's story of his own irritation at finding about a dozen pages devoted to the wedding-clothes of Sir Charles and his bride, and his discovery that a young lady had copied out the whole passage as one of the most striking episodes of the story. The reader who starts upon the long journey through *Sir Charles Grandison* will sympathise both with Hazlitt and with the young lady.

Henry Fielding (1707–1754): his family.

§ 8. The second great name among the novelists of this period is that of HENRY FIELDING—"the prose Homer of human nature," as Byron, with extreme but hardly undeserved praise, called him. The utter difference between Fielding and Richardson, not only in birth and character, but in the quality of their genius, is very remarkable—the one seems formed to be the antithesis of the other. Fielding's family was a younger branch of the illustrious house of Denbigh, which boasted its descent from the Counts of Hapsburg; but General Fielding, the novelist's father, ruined himself by extravagance. He married a Miss Gould of Sharpham Park in Somerset, and it was at Sharpham that their famous son was born. The General gave his son the education of a man of fashion at Eton and the University of Leyden, where he studied law. About 1728 he returned to England, nominally with an annual allowance of £200, but in actual want of money. He found himself obliged to make his own living; and, being a witty youth with a strong inclination to pleasure and society, he chose to write for the stage. During the next eight or nine years he produced a number of pieces and contrived to live well, if precariously. None of his plays seem to have succeeded, and, with the exception of the famous burlesque, *The Tragedy of Tragedies, or Tom Thumb the Great* (1730), they live only in print; but Fielding was a favoured guest among men of pleasure, and struggled on with a certain enjoyment of life. In 1735, or not far from that time, he married a Miss Charlotte Cradock, who brought him, in addition to her beauty and virtues, a portion of about £1500. Unfortunately, he was as great a spendthrift as his father; and, after living for a short time, as it appears, at East Stour in Dorset, where he had spent part of his childhood, he returned to London and ran through his little fortune. He lived riotously and extravagantly, gaining a little by play-writing, and losing more in the management of the Haymarket Theatre. At any rate, in 1737, he gave up his dramatic career, and returned to the law, with which he had coquetted at Leyden. Between this and his call to the bar in 1740 he made a little money by casual journalism, writing constantly on social and literary topics in *The Champion*, a newspaper issued three times a week. In this way he seems to have struck that vein of humorous writing in which he has never had, nor is ever likely to have, a serious rival. In 1742 *Joseph*

His life as a playwright.

His marriage.

Andrews appeared. As has been said, this novel was fundamentally a parody of *Pamela*, which had preceded it in 1740. Fielding, a just and clear-headed critic, was nauseated by the prudery and vulgar morality of Richardson's successful novel; and the caricature with which he assailed it was a little severe. Richardson, who was extremely vain and lacked humour with which to cure his smart, never forgave Fielding's ridicule; and his correspondence shows, not merely his intense soreness at the attack, but his absolute inability to appreciate Fielding's genius. But, like Scarron's *Roman Comique*, *Joseph Andrews* had a vitality of its own apart from the mere breath of caricature, and at once received the honour due to a great original creation. This success encouraged Fielding, in 1743, to publish three volumes of *Miscellanies*, which, in addition to some very ephemeral work and a good deal of rubbish, included the *Journey from this World to the Next*, a clever but unequal Lucianic allegory, and that very remarkable satirical novel, *Mr. Jonathan Wild the Great*. Fielding, with his just and austere sense of morality, and with a grim and not very pleasant humour, wrote this ironical eulogy of the notorious thief-taker to parody the indiscriminate praise given to heroes who, on the ground of virtue, have deserved little. It is impossible to guess when this was written, but the gloomy character of its biting wit seems to point to the period at which its author's fortunes were at their lowest ebb. It presents a singular contrast, at any rate, both in the matter of form and style and in its indifferent cheerfulness of tone, to *Joseph Andrews* and the two other novels.

Publication of "Joseph Andrews."

His "Miscellanies."

Fielding lost his excellent wife in 1743; and, four years later, supplied her place by marrying her maid, with whom he had "frequently bewailed the angel they had lost." This odd match turned out successfully. His second wife made him a prudent and loving partner, and an excellent mother to his children. His life, for which there are few certain data, is very obscure between 1743 and 1748. He was probably practising at the bar; and we know him to have written for two Whig newspapers during "the '45." In 1748, through the influence of Lord Lyttelton, he was placed on the Commission of the Peace for Westminster, and presided at the Bow Street police court. His work in this position was very hard, but it meant a constant income, and he attended conscientiously to his duties. For some years past he had been composing a new novel, which, in 1749, appeared in six volumes, under the immortal name of *Tom Jones, or the History of a Foundling*. This, in 1751, was succeeded by *Amelia*, which was unquestionably intended to be autobiographical, and principally to pay a fitting tribute to the virtues and affection of his first wife. *Amelia* was his last important work. He returned to journalism

Second marriage.

Fielding as a magistrate: "Tom Jones," etc.

for a short time; but his writing and his heavy work in the police court were beginning to tell upon a constitution which had been weakened all his life by drink and late hours. In 1753 he was attacked by dropsy, and was ordered to try a warmer climate. At first he retired to Bath for a short time, but soon returned to London. In June 1754 he set sail for Lisbon, and arrived there in August. On the voyage he wrote a *Journal*, which was published soon after his death, and certainly is a fresh addition to his reputation. He died in October, 1754, in the second month after his arrival, and was buried in the English cemetery at Lisbon. With all his faults—and they were the common vices of the time—he was one of the most amiable men of his century, and few men are so typical of the best side of a nation's character as Fielding is of England's.

His illness and death.

§ 9. If any one writer, more than another, may be said to have given an impulse to the English novel, Fielding may certainly claim the distinction. His close and accurate observation of character concerned itself, first and foremost, with his own fellow-countrymen: his novels are a picture of the English nation in little. Indeed, the various qualities which went to the making of this great novelist produced something very like perfection. His exclusively national tendency does not limit, but merely defines, the scope of his genius. His analysis of character is close and searching—few writers have shown so profound a knowledge of the human heart—but, with all his psychological skill, he never succumbs to the temptation of hindering the progress of his story with minute details of motive and passion. The life of his novels is the strenuous action from which every one of the *dramatis personæ* is inseparable. The relation between the characters and the plot is reciprocal. He crowds his stage with figures, and passes them through a succession of adventures, each of which, in receiving its interest from their presence, throws additional light upon their character. These incidents have, in certain cases, just that amount of extravagance and improbability which places their heroes in a position of caricature; but Fielding's satire is never so far exaggerated as to be untrue to life, and the addition of a ludicrous detail here and there simply convinces us of the reality of the picture. Fielding had a keen sense of the grotesque, especially in low life, which must have been continually increased by his practice at the bar and his work at Bow Street; and, in consequence, his pictures of the lower classes are the finest examples, perhaps, in any language, of realistic caricature. What Hogarth did in his paintings, Fielding did in his novels. But he was by no means a mere realist, as the term goes—unsparing of brutal details, and enhancing the startling truth of his picture with grim

National character of Fielding's work.

Inter-relation of character with plot.

Fielding's satire and realism.

satire. His writing has, it is impossible to deny, a certain coarseness which was only natural in a writer of his time; it has a disposition for details which we now consider unnecessary and unpleasant. But this tendency is always refined by an admirable sense of humour. Of English humorists, Fielding, after Shakespeare, is the greatest. Others —Ben Jonson and Swift, for instance—hold a very high place, but their humour is one-sided and bitter, and springs from their contempt of human weakness. True humour, in Shakespeare and Fielding, has at its root an abundance of sympathy with mortal frailty, a spirit of universal loving-kindness; it is founded upon the intimate sense of contrast between the grotesque and pathetic in human affairs—the sense which, recognising the real foolishness and smallness of man's doings, subtracts nothing from their apparent and practical value. This sense of relative proportion—for that is the commonplace reality to which it may be brought—is the secret of Fielding's immortality. The boisterous fun and reckless laughter of his books with their prodigality of Homeric incident, is restrained and softened by their element of pathos.

His sense of humour.

In this respect Fielding is a far greater novelist than Richardson, who had little of the Shakespearean spirit. Just as Swift recognised merely the grotesque side of things, and strayed into an almost incredible ferocity of satire, so Richardson had eyes only for the pathos of life, and erred in excess of sentiment. Fielding occupies the mean between the two: to the casual observer his work points in the direction of Swift rather than in that of Richardson. As a matter of fact, the antithesis between himself and Richardson, of which we have already spoken, is not so absolute as we might imagine; his sense of balance prevents him from using up that vein of pathos on which the unhumorous Richardson had worked so untiringly. But the great contrast remains from another point of view. Fielding had humour, while Richardson had not so much as an apology for that precious gift. Again, Richardson worked in the closest of atmospheres; his novels are the naked history of temperament and feeling, with the merest rag of a plot to cover them, and, like all exclusively psychological studies, suffer morbidly from the want of fresh air. But with Fielding we come into the open. His whole method is utterly different. As we have said, he uses—and this is not his least Shakespearean characteristic—an elaborate plot for the development of his figures, suffering them to grow freely and naturally instead of isolating them in a stuffy parlour and encouraging their growth by a constant rearrangement of the ventilators and attention to the fire. Fielding's men and women live by contact with adventure and each other; they are gregarious and sociable. It is a commonplace of criticism that the plot of *Tom Jones* is the most perfect in English

Comparison with Richardson.

Fielding's plots: their unity.

fiction; and, although there are minor qualifications to this eulogy, the unity and concentration of the novel upon one main plan, and its comparative freedom from digression, are certainly without many parallels. The faults of construction habitual to Fielding are, for the most part, the result of the foreign method of fiction which is seen in the "picaresque" novels of Spain and in their culminating example, the *Gil Blas* of the Frenchman Le Sage (1715). His heroes and heroines are always on the road; they pursue each other in coaches and post-chaises; they sleep in innumerable inns; they meet fellow-travellers who engage in long conversations and are only too easily tempted into irrelevant autobiographies. As long as coaching continued to be the regular form of travelling it exercised an influence upon fiction which is now all the harder to understand in that modern novelists derive so little inspiration from the railway train. And, although Fielding, with Defoe, Smollett, Scott, and Dickens, has invested English roads and inns with a prodigious amount of fictitious history, and thus has earned the eternal gratitude of the curious traveller, this method of story-telling, by its restlessness, has the effect of spoiling complete unity of design.

Result of "picaresque" influence on the English novel.

§ 10. To all intents and purposes, *Mr. Jonathan Wild the Great*, although published later than *Joseph Andrews*, is Fielding's earliest book. Something has already been said of its subject. Jonathan Wild was a notorious criminal who had been hanged in 1725. From being a thief, housebreaker, and highwayman, he became a spy and secret agent of the police; and, combining this occupation with the receipt of stolen goods, suffered the just penalty of his doings. The irony and satire which Fielding expended upon this villain's performances place the book in a division by itself, and contrast very strongly with the good-humour of *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Jones*. The admiration which he showers upon the hero's meanness and depravity has a bitter mockery which is more consistent with Swift's vitriolic temper than with Fielding's equable genius; and the story, with an abundance of humorous writing, is, in the end, one of the most unpleasant of burlesques.

"Jonathan Wild" (1743).

In *Joseph Andrews* we have the true awakening of Fielding's genius and humour. The groundwork of the plot is true burlesque, audacious and amusing. Joseph is the supposed brother of Pamela, and Pamela herself enters the novel as the wife of her master, Mr. B., whose name Fielding rudely supplied as Booby. As a footman, Joseph meets with temptation from his mistress, as Pamela had done from her master. The transference of the sister's virtue to the brother is an admirable stroke of humour. When Joseph's mistress, disgusted with his resistance, expels him from her house, he wanders about England with Parson

"Joseph Andrews" (1742).

Adams, and, after the ordinary series of adventures by the road, finds an agreeable change in his fortunes and marries the very charming and innocent girl to whom he has been long attached. At the end of the book Joseph's origin is revealed by a whimsical touch of satire; he is no longer a member of the Andrews family, but a person of higher consequence. One thing is obvious to every reader of the novel. Its burlesque character becomes the merest incident in its progress; we are diverted from the remembrance of *Pamela* by an independent growth of humour, and, in thinking of it afterwards, it is only on second thoughts that we remember it to be a parody. Its great gift to posterity is, of course, the character of Parson Adams, the consummate expression of Fielding's humour—equal, individually, to any of his later creations. Adams is really the hinge on which the novel turns, the life and soul of its intrigue. His eccentricities and pedantry are lovable in the light of his virtue and courage; and Fielding, while laughing at his oddities, crowns them with a gentle humanity which is thoroughly characteristic of his own broad view of life. In Parson Adams, Fielding, another Cervantes, created another Don Quixote. The minor characters of the novel, and especially the lady's-maid, Mrs. Slipslop, are equally amusing; and the loves of Joseph and Fanny proceed amid surroundings of pure farce tinged with the spirit of comedy.

In *Tom Jones* the element of comedy is deeper and stronger, and the relation of the book to human life is more serious. Its stage is crowded with a variety of figures, the most insignificant of which has its marked individuality. At the same time, each is so thoroughly typical of its class that we think instinctively of this book as the most complete picture of contemporary society which it is possible to recall. In Mr. Allworthy and Squire Western, the contrasted types of the country squire; in Square and Thwackum, the rival pedants; in Lady Bellaston, the dissolute woman of fashion; and in all the other characters which throng the pages of this delightful book, Fielding shows his all-embracing observation of the world around him, and has given us a more vivid picture of the life of his day than we could gain from a thousand memoirs or collections of letters. The great value of prose fiction—perhaps the only valid excuse for its existence—is its truth to the life of its period, and of this truth *Tom Jones* is the highest example in English. As in *Joseph Andrews*, there is a good deal of rough horseplay which, to a modern taste, is offensive. The hero himself, in his adventures, shows a very blunt sense of honour; indeed, one cannot conceive a less immaculate representative of injured virtue. When we come to the end of the book and find that, after all his misdemeanours, he is to win Sophia, we feel a sentiment of indignant protest; for Sophia is as charming and spotless a heroine as Jones is a questionable and faulty hero. Fielding himself was in love

"*Tom Jones*" (1749).

with her from the very beginning; and, in introducing her to his readers, his mock-heroic manner at once becomes lyric.

Style of "Tom Jones."

All through *Tom Jones* he shows himself the master of a graceful and flexible style, proportionate in its variety to the field which the novel covers. If he is the "prose Homer of human nature," *Tom Jones* is his Iliad, with Jones as its Achilles. The humorous groundwork of his plan is epic; and never through the long narrative does he forget to give his manner this epic tinge, paying to Jones and Sophia heroic honours, inflating their distresses with a subtle touch of burlesque, rising to the highest point of mock-Homeric writing in his account of the battle in the churchyard, mingling exaggeration with imaginative poetry in his introduction of Sophia. To say that Fielding's style is a model of fine English is to go too far. The immense labour which he expended over *Tom Jones* did not perfect the correct grammar of the book, nor did it remove certain solecisms. But he had a style whose perfect fluency and range of expression effectually refutes any charge of slip-shod writing; which, sensitive to its subject, responded always on the right note. Unquestionably, the instances in which we are most free to judge Fielding's peculiar manner are the short essays prefixed to each of the books of *Tom Jones*, and serving as general introductions to what follows. In these prefaces, so colloquial and personal, we have a clear vision of the man himself, of the author in his relation to his epic, of the humorist expounding and identifying himself with his humorous masterpiece. They fasten the bond between him and his characters; for, in his temporary detachment from them, he is more than ever at one with their joys and sorrows, and appears as their champion and apologist; and, further, in preparing, by the artful means of these light and chatty monologues, his audience's sympathies and co-ordinating them with his own, he breaks down every prejudice and gives his story an irresistible charm which, it is not too much to say, no other English novel possesses in a like degree.

Occasional essays in the novel.

Amelia is a very different kind of book from *Tom Jones*, and is manifestly inferior. It was, as we have said, written as a tribute to the memory of a wife whom Fielding had, as he felt, treated with little justice. As an act of reparation, it is naturally melancholy in tone, and is overcharged with a pathos to which, unaccompanied by any alleviating quality, he could ill accommodate himself. He could write pathetically enough, but his pathos was an essential element in his humour. In *Amelia* the condition of things is reversed, and, in consequence of this paradoxical treatment of the subject, the book is frankly unhumorous, save for certain episodes. Amelia herself is almost tediously patient and perfect; her husband, Captain Booth, in whom Fielding contritely exaggerated his own faults, is as tediously fickle and selfish:

"Amelia" (1751).

their respective virtues and imperfections are stereotyped. Yet it would be unfair to deny that Amelia is charming or that Booth is natural; for both, when all is said and done, leave a not unpleasant impression. Fielding's contrition, if it exaggerated details, was sincere and manly, and unstained by sickliness. He was incapable of sentimentality or the casuistry of repentance; and the heart from which he wrote *Amelia* was heavy with an unmitigated sense of his own wrong-doing. The great moral characteristic of his work is the thoroughness of its sentiment and passion. He himself, like his own Jones, was a man of elemental passions, definite and unshaded; his view of life was frank and lusty, simple and unconventional. He believed in great passions, great virtues, and great vices, which triumphed, in their distinctness, over the minor accidents of life. And, while he, like others of his age, allowed a certain laxity of behaviour to men, and demanded a far higher standard from women, he nevertheless drew the line firmly between right and wrong, and never pleaded the cause of sin and injustice. His morality is, perhaps, crude and simple, but it is infinitely more healthy than the more artificial systems of later times.

Morality of Fielding's work.

§ 11. TOBIAS GEORGE SMOLLETT was born at Dalquhurn in Dumbartonshire. His father, the youngest son of Sir James Smollett of Bonhill, died in the boy's childhood, and, till his nineteenth year, he spent a large part of his time at his grandfather's house, going for his education to Dumbarton School, and afterwards to the University of Glasgow. Having no expectation of a fortune, he early prepared to make his own living, and was apprenticed to a Glasgow doctor named Gordon. But he was already longing to write something, and, in 1739, we find him making the long journey to London and submitting a very poor tragedy, *The Regicide*, to Lord Lyttelton, who refused to undertake the duty of sponsor. In 1740 Sir James died, and Smollett, left without visible means of support, entered the navy as surgeon's mate on a man-of-war. In this capacity he was present at the unfortunate and inglorious affair of Carthagena, under Admiral Vernon's command, and was able to study nautical peculiarities, and to learn by bitter experience the atrocious cruelty, corruption, and incompetency which were then the curse of the navy. He left the service at Jamaica and remained for a few years in the West Indies, meeting there his future wife, Miss Nancy Lascelles, who gave herself out to be an heiress. In 1744 he returned to London, and, in great poverty, struggled on with medicine and literature. His satires and other verses of this period are forgotten; but in 1748 he brought out the first, and in some respects the most vigorous of his fictions, *Roderick Random*, which won instant success. This was followed in 1751 by *Peregrine Pickle*,

TOBIAS SMOLLETT (1721–1771).

Expedition to the West Indies.

Publication of "Roderick Random," etc.

after which Smollett devoted himself to literature, and became a prolific miscellaneous writer, engaging in political controversy. A trenchant, ready style, and a natural gift of satire which was often indistinguishable from abuse, made him a valuable helper to any side; but he was rash, violent, and impulsive, and was constantly faithless to his party, not from any unworthy motive, but under the influence of his personal feelings. In 1753 he brought out his third novel, *The Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom*. If this book is, as charitable critics have supposed, a child of the same motive as Fielding's *Jonathan Wild*, its hero is the most unpleasant and unprincipled of scoundrels, cheats, and swindlers; and it proved too unsavoury for the public. For some years Smollett abandoned original fiction. His next work was a translation of *Don Quixote* (1755), in which he showed how unable he was to appreciate the higher, more poetical, and ideal side of Cervantes' great conception, and confined himself solely to its grotesque and farcical features. He established his connection with journalism in the editorship of *The Critical Review*, and so brought himself into collision with a whole swarm of politicians, writers, and doctors; and, what with this and his *History of England* (1758), he managed to reap considerable reputation and profit. In 1759, however, he wrote, in *The Critical Review*, a terrible account of maladministration in the navy; and Admiral Knowles, whom he had severely blamed, brought an action for libel against him and defeated him; he was fined £100 and imprisoned for three months. While in prison he continued to edit his paper, and wrote part of *Sir Launcelot Greaves*. This novel, which, after running as a serial through several numbers of *The British Magazine*, was published in 1762, was a half serious and not very successful attempt to create an English Don Quixote. It was spoiled by the too great accuracy of the imitation; for Sir Launcelot bore an exact personal resemblance to his model, without any pretence to actual rivalry, and the result seems rather dull and superfluous.

Smollett's political writing and misfortunes.

Although Smollett had, in spite of his imprisonment, succeeded in literature, the rest of his life was far from happy. His health broke down, and, on the loss of his only child, a daughter, he went abroad and travelled in France and Italy for two years. The result of his journey was the *Travels in France and Italy* (1766), which was written in a very bitter spirit, and showed that Smollett either could not or would not appreciate anything he saw. People, scenery, works of art, all came under the lash of his distressing satire. Nothing shows more clearly the state of mind which his failing health had produced than the disgusting *Adventures of an Atom* (1769)—a ferocious lampoon attacking, under the thin disguise of a Japanese story, his former patron Lord Bute, and involving in its calumnies the young king,

Decline of his health: final works.

Anson, Mansfield, and Chatham. By this time his health was completely destroyed by incessant labour and agitation, and, like Fielding, he was obliged to try the effect of a more genial climate. He resided for the last year of his life at Leghorn, and there, in spite of weakness, exhaustion, and suffering, his irregular genius revived in its brightest flash of comic humour—*The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker*. This novel, whose tone is almost a recantation of all his previous ferocity and harshness, was published just before his death in 1771. Like Fielding, he died and was buried in a foreign land; and thus the two novelists who, almost more than any others, were thoroughly and exclusively English, rest in foreign graves—Fielding at Lisbon, Smollett at Leghorn.

"Humphrey Clinker." Smollett's death.

§ 12. In the structure of his fiction Smollett is manifestly inferior to Richardson and Fielding. He was, briefly speaking, a very successful follower of the Spanish picaresque novelists and Le Sage: his books are a string of haphazard, inconsequent adventures, following no definite plot and making no attempt at the evolution of character. The heroes of *Roderick Random*, *Peregrine Pickle*, and *Ferdinand Count Fathom*, are all of the type of Lazarillo de Tormes—abandoned young rascals, who go through the world with no pretence to scruple, and win their way, to their own satisfaction and ultimate felicity, by bullying, lying, and making indiscriminate love to every girl they meet. Their faithful comrades, who deserve a more honourable life, act as their whipping-boys when they get into trouble, and take the burden of life off their irresponsible backs. In this mode of story everything depends on a succession of ludicrous adventures, a constant maintenance of broad farce. The characters, from first to last, are stamped with certain marks by which we know them, and no attempt is made to search their hearts or analyse their motives. Smollett's method, therefore, depends purely upon external observation; his heroes and their friends are puppets, managed and worked with a due regard to correctness of costume and local colour; none of his novels is a comedy of manners, full of lively, breathing figures, like *Tom Jones*. But, as a set-off to this obvious defect, there is the fact that very few people have used their faculty of observation like Smollett. He had an amazingly comprehensive eye for outward detail. Without any imagination to speak of, he made himself thoroughly master of every experience which he met, and transferred its circumstances to paper with a realistic minuteness and completeness, and with a power of description that leaves an indelible impression on the reader. The ship-scenes in *Roderick Random* are the most striking example of this power. Their hideous accuracy and the venom which flowed from Smollett's pen as he wrote them only increase

Smollett's novels: their "picaresque" heroes.

His faculty of superficial observation.

Its minuteness.

their veracity. *Roderick Random* is largely autobiographical. In the story of his hero's miseries at school, his apprenticeship with the apothecary, his journey to London, and his experiences in the fleet, Smollett draws upon his own capital of adventure. Roderick's savage truculence is the result of his own detestation for the life he had led in those days; and all the earlier part of the novel is written with a ferocious energy to which a keen memory gave its sting. There is probably no detail in the account of the medical examination and the story of tyranny on board ship which had not, in actual life, printed itself on Smollett's vision like a photograph. *Roderick Random*, for this reason, is in some respects the liveliest of Smollett's novels. With all its hero's worthlessness, and in spite of a prevailing ugliness of detail, it is an eminently readable book. *Peregrine Pickle*, on the other hand, which, as regards its hero and the character of his adventures, is neither better nor worse than its predecessor, lapses, after a good beginning, into a slight monotony, relieved here and there by elaborate comic episodes, but producing in general a long-drawn and tedious effect. The worst thing about Smollett's heroes, from an artistic point of view, is that, while we recognise them by their constant faithfulness to the worst qualities, we gain no other impression of them. Roderick Random, for example, is at one time described as gawky and ugly, and even mean and cowardly, at another time he is represented as handsome and brave; and, with such inconsistencies, we are forced, in the end, to fall back upon the amusement to be derived from their boisterous pranks and adventures.

"Roderick Random" (1748)

"Peregrine Pickle" (1751).

It is a very extraordinary thing that, at the end of his life, when his temper seemed to be growing more gloomy and fierce with every fresh book he wrote, Smollett should have turned his hand, in *Humphrey Clinker*, to a picture of manners not unworthy of Fielding. The change is radical. Hitherto, he had written a lively and picturesque style, and his stories had rambled along in a happy, inconsequent way. But *Humphrey Clinker* is an advance upon this fluency; the letters of which the story is composed read, not merely with ease, but with an unusual grace and charm of style. Its humour, too, is above the plane of farce. The humour which we detect in *Roderick Random* and *Peregrine Pickle* is chiefly mechanical, depending upon blows and kicks and extravagant terrors and other rough pieces of frivolity. But, although there is plenty of fun and grotesque incident in *Humphrey Clinker*, the note which it touches is deeper, and the whole framework of the tale vibrates with it. Hitherto, we have remembered Smollett's characters, from Commodore Trunnion downwards, only by their oddities, by some phrase or mannerism which becomes familiar with repetition; but we add Squire Matthew Bramble and his

"Humphrey Clinker" (1771): *contrast with its predecessors.*

travelling companions, not to our gallery of caricatures, but to the acquaintances of ordinary life. They rub shoulders with the best company of fiction. Here, too, the wanderings of the picaresque heroes are replaced by something more credible and reasonable. The foundation of the story is the journey of the valetudinarian Squire round the English watering-places in search of health, and with him go his sister Tabitha, his nephew and niece, Mr. and Miss Melford, and an illiterate Welsh maid-servant, Winifred Jenkins. Humphrey Clinker is a Methodist footman, picked up on the route, and has really very little to do with the story. Their adventures are told in the letters of each of the party to their special correspondents; and these letters, from Squire Bramble's splendid descriptions of Bath and Harrogate down to Winifred Jenkins' admirably misspelt scrawls to her fellow-servant—the most brilliant example, before *The Yellowplush Papers*, of this kind of humour—are written with so uniform a vivacity that, if the method of telling a story by letters was ever, from all points of view, successful, it was here. Matthew Bramble finds all his health-resorts detestable, and extracts a buoyant cheerfulness from his own hypochondria; young Mr. Melford observes men and manners and eligible young ladies with a sprightly and modish wit; Miss Lydia is followed and won by a faithful admirer; Miss Bramble, whose letters to her housekeeper are as precious as Winifred Jenkins' less pretentious correspondence, falls a victim to the angular charms of the Celtic Lismahago; and Winifred herself fixes her affections upon the pious Clinker. The contrast between this charming book and its predecessors is the most pleasant imaginable. There is not much of a plot, but, on the other hand, the course of the tale is spoiled by none of those irrelevant digressions in the Spanish manner to which Fielding was attracted in his Man of the Hill's story in *Tom Jones*, and Smollett himself fell a venal prey in the *Memoirs of a Lady of Quality*, which he inserted for Lady Vane in *Peregrine Pickle*. The other novels are, in their way, pleasant reading; but it is on the merits of *Humphrey Clinker* alone, its abundant humour, its droll incident, its reality, and its good temper, that Smollett can claim his place among the great novelists.

Plan of the novel.

Smollett was something of a poet as well as a novelist, and, among other things, wrote the powerful verses called *The Tears of Scotland*, which breathed his generous and patriotic indignation, horror-struck at the cruelties inflicted by the "Butcher" Cumberland's orders after Culloden. This poem is honourable to Smollett's courage as well as to his talent; for so free an expression of outraged patriotism was then dangerous; and it is recorded that the poet, warned of his peril after composing six stanzas of vigorous denunciation, instantly sat down and added a seventh more bitter and stinging than those which had gone before.

Smollett's poetry.

§ 13. LAURENCE STERNE was a brilliant and irregular genius, whose work occupies an unique place in English literature. His character and writings were equally eccentric, and were guiltless of consistency or attention to principle. He was the son of a soldier, Roger Sterne, who held an ensign's commission in a regiment of foot, and he was born at Clonmel in Ireland. During the first ten years of his life he travelled from barrack to barrack with his father's regiment; but in 1723 he went to the grammar school at Halifax, and stayed there till 1731. In the same year his father, then quartered in Jamaica, died of a fever, and it was by the generosity of a cousin of his father's that Sterne went to Cambridge, as a sizar of Jesus College. His father's family had considerable influence. Dr. Richard Sterne, his great-grandfather, had been Master of Jesus and Archbishop of York, and his uncle, Dr. Jaques Sterne, procured him preferment in York diocese. In 1738, two years after his first ordination, Sterne was inducted to the living of Sutton-in-the-Forest; and, during his twenty years of residence in this country place, his marriage with Miss Elizabeth Lumley (1741) brought him the additional living of Stillington as a wedding portion; while, in 1741, he was collated to a prebendal stall in York Minster, exchanging it, in the following year, for one richer. As a clergyman his life reflected little credit on his profession. He was fanciful, vain, and self-indulgent, perpetually at war with the neighbouring clergy; his conduct towards his wife was base and selfish, and he masked caprice and harshness under a pretence of extreme sensibility. Moreover, he flirted prodigiously with that odious sentimentalism of which he became the apostle. "I must ever," he said, "have some Dulcinea in my head; it harmonises the soul." It was not, however, till 1759 that he wrote anything on his own account. The first two volumes of *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gent.*, were published by a York bookseller at the beginning of 1760, and the novelty and oddity of their style instantly raised Sterne to the summit of popularity. He went up to London to enjoy his success and became the lion of the season, gratifying his morbid taste for flattery, and indulging in a series of new flirtations and intrigues. Lord Fauconberg presented him to a much better Yorkshire living; and, at the close of the season, he went to his new rectory of Coxwold to write the third and fourth volumes of *Tristram Shandy*, which appeared in 1761. However, his health was beginning to fail, and he was obliged to seek rest. At the end of 1761 the fifth and sixth volumes of his book appeared; and, early in 1762, he went to Toulouse with his wife and daughter, and stayed abroad till 1764. In January, 1765, the seventh and eighth volumes of *Tristram Shandy* were published. He pre-

LAURENCE STERNE (1713–1768).

Parochial life in Yorkshire.

Publication of first part of "Tristram Shandy" (1760).

Sterne's last years and death.

viously, in 1760, had supplemented the earliest section of his novel by a book of *Sermons*, written in the same style; and in 1766 and 1769 he provided the public with further volumes of similar discourses. Meanwhile, in 1765, he had gone abroad once more, returning in 1766, and the material of this journey was worked up into the two volumes of the *Sentimental Journey*. The ninth volume of *Tristram Shandy* completed the book in January, 1767, and, a little more than a year later, the *Sentimental Journey* appeared. The two small volumes were intended to be the beginning of another serial book; but, unfortunately, once again in London, social distractions and an animated flirtation with Mrs. Draper, the lady known in his *Letters from Yorick* (1775) as Eliza, exhausted the small capital of health which remained to Sterne. In March, 1768, he died in a Bond Street lodging-house. The servants who attended his deathbed plundered him of such trifles as he possessed; and there is a story that his body was stolen after burial and dissected by an anatomical professor at Cambridge.

Sterne's style.

§ 14. The unparalleled eccentricity of Sterne's style is one of the most curious things in English; it brought him his reputation, and made his too exuberant sentimentalism an influence, not merely in England, but in Europe. It is one of the most artificial styles imaginable; its effect depends on parentheses and lacunæ and sudden suppressions; it follows no known rules of English prose, but steps out confidently on a path of broken periods and isolated interjections. At the same time, while it never leads us to forget its author, but emphasises his personality very strongly, its imperfections and sins against grammar and logic are so perfected that it reads naturally and without effort, and every sentence at once conveys its meaning. In this respect its deficiencies are its real strength; we can say of no other style with more truth that it is the man himself. Sterne deliberately set himself to the task of writing as no one else dared to write, and his audacity captured him an audience which he could have secured in no other way. Every sentence of his work, with its absence of construction, its sudden irrelevance, its confusion of all order, is a type and complete instance of his method of composition.

"Tristram Shandy" (1760–1767).

Tristram Shandy is not, in any accepted sense of the word, a novel at all; it has no plot, nothing even of the coherency of Smollett's hotch-potch of adventures. The hero never appears. Sometimes the story is told through his mouth; sometimes the task of this inconsequent rambling is transferred to Mr. Yorick, as Sterne called himself in all his books. Here and there we feel that we are launched upon a regular current of plot; from time to time we are thrown back again into a chaos of digression. We never know how far Sterne is going to take us; his episodes lead us nowhere. In the middle of a more or less consecutive story we are brought to a dead stop; we break off in the climax of a

sentence into a fresh chapter; we turn a page and see a row of asterisks, a diagram, or a black oblong of printer's ink. The consequence is that Sterne is never tedious; his madness is so irrevocably his method that, to a reader with any sense of humour, it is never irritating. Moreover, in this prodigal jumble of frivolity is enshrined a humour which, with all its defects, is as true and delicate as any, blending its grotesqueness with its pathos in that happy conjunction which so few have achieved. Sterne could be a ribald buffoon; and the grave fault of *Tristram Shandy*—a fault which becomes obvious long before we really appreciate the book's virtues—is its simpering indecency. The coarseness of tone which distinguishes Fielding and Smollett is an utterly different thing. The indecency of *Tristram Shandy* is contained in sly allusions, in inferences read between the lines, in dashes and marks of interrogation, and is nothing less than wanton prurience. Sterne was much indebted to Rabelais, but his vice of writing is an infinitely more objectionable thing than Rabelais' boisterous animalism. The worst point about it is that it is closely allied to a capacity for pathos which, in its excess, becomes mere snivelling. But when his humour got the better of his indecency and sentimentalism he wrote in the spirit of Shakespeare. The whole Shandy household—"my father," with his crotchets and philosophy, Uncle Toby, with his love for military operations, his simplicity, his affectionate nature and his intense compassion for all misfortune, the faithful Corporal Trim, and every individual down to the "foolish fat scullion"—are creatures of the finest comedy. As an instance of real humour, of the union of the ludicrous and pathetic, Uncle Toby is among the first masterpieces of character. For example, when Tristram's father was consoling himself for the death of his elder son, and was quoting, without context, the consolatory letter of Servius Sulpicius to Cicero, Uncle Toby thought him to be relating an experience of his own travels as a Turkey merchant. "'And pray, brother,' quoth my uncle Toby, . . . 'what year of our Lord was this?' 'It was no year of our Lord,' replied my father. 'That's impossible!' cried my uncle Toby. 'Simpleton!' said my father, 'it was forty years before Christ was born.' My uncle Toby had but two things for it, either to suppose his brother to be the Wandering Jew, or that his misfortunes had disordered his brain. 'May the Lord God of heaven and earth protect him and restore him!' said my uncle Toby, praying silently for my father, and with tears in his eyes. My father placed the tears to a proper account, and went on with his harangue with great spirit."

Humour of the book: Sterne's defects of humour.

Character of Uncle Toby.

This is not an isolated instance of the pure gold which, in Sterne's books, is to be found among much dross. Our pleasant familiarity with Uncle Toby, Widow Wadman, and the rest,

growing by a constant series of allusions rather than by any definite description—for they are introduced hastily and accidentally, and, in every case, are the subjects of apparently casual reference—is all the greater and more lasting on account of the digressions and the shapeless pattern in which their portraits are framed. So far as Sterne himself is concerned, the most interesting digression in *Tristram Shandy* is the continental journey in the seventh volume, which is, in a measure, a forecast of the *Sentimental Journey*. Of this later work, famous as it is, there is not much to say. Sterne was essentially a creature of sentiment, and in these notes of travel we are in the closest relation with his temperament. His sensitive spirit vibrated to the slightest incident, and magnified it to heroic proportions of pathos. Like Richardson, Sterne, in his character of a man of feeling, excited more sympathy in France than in England. The English taste, less fine and emotional, put much of his sentiment down to mawkish affectation; and the popularity of the *Sentimental Journey* is due to its picturesque character rather than to its slightly morbid tone. Nevertheless, the emphasis which Sterne laid on sentiment, while, in extreme cases, it produced tearful books like Henry Mackenzie's *Man of Feeling*, brought a certain element of needed humanity into English literature. The hard, brutal quality of Smollett's work, and the fact that Fielding's pathos is the merest minimum, are signs that something more gentle was necessary, and this Sterne supplied. His sentiment is not without religion of a kind; but Mr. Yorick's sermons afford very little pious consolation, and are simply Shandean pleasantries refined for the pulpit. Sterne possessed a great capacity for parading obscure and quaint erudition, and, through the mouths of Mr. Shandy, Tristram, and Mr. Yorick, there pass a great many allusions to forgotten authors, which, at the time, gave Sterne a great reputation for learning. But later ages, expert in the study of Burton and Rabelais, to say nothing of the old lawyers and canonists, have discovered that the vicar of Coxwold was a sad plagiarist, who drained these fountains of allusion without scruple. Nevertheless, he has not spoiled our appreciation of Rabelais or Burton, but, by his unprincipled borrowing, has given an additional originality of flavour to his own book.

Sterne's treatment of character.

The "Sentimental Journey" (1768).

Influence of Sterne's sentimentality on literature.

Sterne's plagiarisms.

§ 15. The prose fiction of OLIVER GOLDSMITH is not by any means his only claim to distinction. Johnson, in the Latin epitaph for his friend's monument in the Abbey, spoke of him as one "qui nullum fere scribendi genus non tetigit, nullum quod tetigit non ornavit"—who left scarce any kind of writing untouched, and touched none that he did not grace. Moreover, he belongs, by his friendships, to a somewhat later

OLIVER GOLDSMITH (1728–1774). His place in literature.

period in eighteenth-century literature than Fielding, Sterne, or Smollett. But the best place to be found for him is among the novelists. By virtue of *The Vicar of Wakefield* he is worthy to sit beside the greatest masters of English fiction; while, in the admirable delicacy of his prose and his command of narrative style, he is the best follower of Steele and Addison, using their free and graceful English for his charming fiction.

His life.

He was born at Pallas in County Longford, where his father, a poor curate of English extraction, was struggling, with the aid of a miserable stipend, to bring up a large family. His early years were spent at Lissoy in Westmeath, about eight miles from his birthplace; and, in 1744, an uncle, Mr. Contarine, sent him to Trinity College, Dublin, where he obtained a sizarship. However, his life at college was idle and disreputable; he became notorious for his irregularities, and, although his extravagance was time after time forgiven him, was always out of pocket and in debt. He took his degree in 1749, and, without any fixed intention of embracing a profession, was a tutor for a short time in an Irish family. In 1753 he made up his mind, after long hesitation, to read medicine, and went for that purpose to Edinburgh. However, his design did not hold firm very long, but, migrating to Leyden in 1754, he travelled all over the Continent. He boasted afterwards that he had taken a medical degree at some foreign university—either Louvain or Padua—but his very superficial and inaccurate knowledge of medicine makes the assertion of very little value. It seems that he went through Europe like a beggar, tramping the highroads with a flute, or subsisting on the casual alms of a poor scholar. While wandering in Switzerland he sketched out the plan of *The Traveller*, the poem which afterwards was the beginning of his fame. In 1756 he found his way to London, and, during the next eight years, his life was a continual struggle with famine. His literary apprenticeship was passed in a severe school, and he began by reading proofs for Richardson's printing press. In 1757 the bookseller Griffiths, who owned *The Monthly Review*, engaged him to write articles for his magazine, and employed him in a number of small commissions—schoolbooks, tales for children, prefaces, indices, reviews of books, and contributions to various periodicals—in which he certainly found plenty of time to form and practise his admirable style. But literary work was only his partial occupation. If he was constant in anything, it was in his hack-work for the booksellers; and this, even with the smallness of the wage, would have probably given him enough to live upon had it not been for his extreme improvidence. He was childishly generous, madly in love with pleasure and fine clothes, and fond of gambling. To make some money he served, now as a chemist's shopman, now as an usher in a boarding-school, the drudge of

Early travels.

Period of struggle in London.

his employer and the butt and laughing-stock of his pupils, now as a doctor in the lowest and most squalid parts of London—among "the beggars of Axe Lane," as he himself expressed it. More than once, under the pressure of intolerable distress, he exchanged the bondage of the school for the severer drudgery of the corrector's table in the printing office, and more than once he was driven back again to the school. At one time, during this wretched period of his career, he failed to pass an examination for the post of hospital mate, when, in order to appear decently before the board at Surgeons' Hall, and having no money with which to get new clothes, he pawned a suit which Griffiths had lent him.

But although, to the end of his life, Goldsmith's expenditure was far in advance of his earnings, success came to him before long. His *Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe* (1759), his first original essay, which was published anonymously, obtained him more work from the booksellers. In May, 1761, he met Dr. Johnson for the first time, and from that day forward was under the wing of this excellent and dictatorial friend. Goldsmith continued to write anonymously for some time after this meeting. The masterly *Citizen of the World* (1762), in which he assumed the character of a Chinese traveller in England, was a reprint of letters originally published in Newbery's *Public Ledger*. In 1764, however, *The Traveller* appeared under his own name, and, in 1765, he collected his occasional essays into a single volume. This was the opening of a period of comparative prosperity; he emerged from the slough of obscure drudgery and became a popular favourite. The public were agreed that, since the days of Pope, nothing so harmonious or so original as *The Traveller* had been seen; and Goldsmith, with a future of uninterrupted success, might, but for his folly and improvidence, from which no amount of fortune could have saved him, have died a rich man. He came from obscure suburban lodgings into the town, and eventually settled down in extravagant chambers in the Middle Temple. In 1766 appeared *The Vicar of Wakefield*, which Johnson had sold for him two years before; and in January, 1768, Goldsmith came before the public as a comic dramatist with *The Good-Natur'd Man*. Although the production of the piece at Covent Garden was not altogether a failure, it was rather too robust a comedy for the sentimental taste of the time, and formed too strong a contrast to the admired and tearful *False Delicacy* of the popular author, Hugh Kelly, which had appeared the week before. Two years later, in 1770, Goldsmith followed up *The Traveller* with a companion poem, *The Deserted Village*, written in something of the same manner and with no less touching a perfection; and, in 1773, he provided *The Good-Natur'd Man* with a worthy

Beginning of original work and introduction to Johnson.

Publication of "The Traveller" (1764).

Period of literary success.

pendant in the shape of *She Stoops to Conquer*. In these closing years of his life he was one of the most popular writers of the time; his society was courted by the brilliant circle which surrounded Johnson and Reynolds, and he became a member of the famous Club so intimately associated with the literary history of his day. With a far greater genius and gift of writing, he stands to his contemporaries in somewhat of the same relation that existed between Gay and the circle of Pope and Swift. It was as impossible to avoid loving him as to avoid despising him. His vanity, his childish though not malignant envy, his Irish aptitude for blunders, his eagerness to shine in conversation, for which he was peculiarly unfitted, his weaknesses and genius combined, made him the pet and laughing-stock of the whole company. Meanwhile, his constant extravagance kept him in continual slavery to the booksellers, and they, presuming on his graceful English and exquisite talent, persuaded him to write a set of books for which he neither had the requisite knowledge nor could make the necessary researches—a *History of England* (1764), a *History of Rome* (1769), a *History of Greece* (1774), and a *History of Animated Nature* (1774). For the first three he had to depend upon second-hand facts, while the last was an abbreviated translation of Buffon; but in all four his grace of narration and style compensated for his total ignorance of the subject. It was only natural that his debts and continual want of money should have preyed upon his mind and injured his health. In 1774 he fell seriously ill, and, relying on his knowledge of medicine, imprudently persisted in disregarding his physician's advice and in employing a violent remedy which put an end to his life. He died at his lodgings in Brick Court, Middle Temple, and was buried in the Temple churchyard. He left £2000 of debts behind him. Yet, in spite of his criminal carelessness, no man's death was so bemoaned in his age, not merely by Johnson and his faithful friends, but by many poor wretches whom he had relieved with an inexhaustible benevolence and a singular disregard of his own difficulties.

His amiability and extravagance.

His death.

§ 16. In whatever Goldsmith wrote he showed the same wonderful delicacy, which made his style the living image of his thought. The squalid distress of his early career was merely the purifying influence of his work. The eighteenth century in England was not remarkable for any over-fastidiousness in literature or manners, and Goldsmith's work is the exception to its age. We naturally think of him as a second Addison. The difference between the spirit and style of the two men is the difference between the beginning and the end of the century. Both men used their language with the same consummate ease, and in no other hands, during that long period of glorious work, do correctness and purity of style free themselves so completely from stiffness. But the element of classical gravity which is natural to all Addison's writing is

Goldsmith's style.

foreign to Goldsmith's. Addison's style, so to speak, always wears a wig : Goldsmith's is in its own hair. Addison receives his readers with a charming condescension and in his best clothes : Goldsmith comes to see them on equal terms and in a becoming *déshabille*. We never feel, in reading Goldsmith, that he is holding himself aloof from us ; he chats to us as easily as Fielding, and, if he has not Fielding's great breadth of vision and depth of insight, his choice of words is better. But we must judge Goldsmith ultimately by his humour. In this respect he is thoroughly characteristic of the change which had passed over English literature since the day of Addison and Pope—the transition from a critical humour to a humour springing more directly from the side of sentiment. Goldsmith never addresses us, like Fielding, with laughter uppermost ; on the other hand, he has nothing of Sterne's nauseous predilection for tears ; but the predominating note in his work is its intense tenderness, its caressing sympathy with misfortune, and the absence of scorn from its recognition of the grotesque. This peculiar form of sentiment—and it would be hard to find a better—is seen at its best in the two companion poems, *The Traveller* and *The Deserted Village*. We do not read the first for its false social theories, nor the second for the inconsistency between the pictures of Auburn in its happiness and in its decay. They attract us by the very sadness of their light verse and by the touch of personal feeling which is visible in every line. Auburn, the "deserted village," is generally supposed to be Lissoy, where Goldsmith had spent much of his childhood ; and, in his hope of returning to pass his age among the scenes of his boyhood, and in all his detailed descriptions of the place, we see the force of reminiscence. In both poems the landscape is seen, as it were, through an atmosphere of soft haze. We can imagine a picture of Auburn by Claude Lorrain ; and, just as in Claude's landscapes we find the formal element of classical temples and a certain ordered cultivation, so these picturesque poems are contained within the artificial limits of the heroic couplet.

His humour. its pathetic quality.

His serious poems.

The almost impalpable humour which lights up the melancholy of *The Deserted Village* is seen at its best in certain chapters of *The Citizen of the World*. The picture of "Mr. Tibbs, the second-rate beau," might stand by itself as Goldsmith's claim to a place among writers of fiction. Beau Tibbs is the finest result of an intimate acquaintance with life, and of an experience that had taught its possessor how much there was to laugh at and how much more to pity. The portrait is not a mere sketch ; it is the finished study of a type. This beau is a pretender to fashion, who lives in a dreadful garret and wears tarnished finery, but, even amid the miserable poverty of his surroundings, boasts of his intimacy with the

"The Citizen of the World" (1762). Character of Beau Tibbs.

leaders of society, and talks of his wretched room as though it were a palace. Painful as this picture, with all its accumulated detail, cannot fail to be, it loses much of its dreariness in the human kindness with which Goldsmith treats it. Beau Tibbs is doubtless a contemptible person; but, in his deliberate insensibility to his surroundings, there is a kind of poor heroism which, if somewhat shameless, is indescribably pathetic. The picture of Major Ponto, in Thackeray's *Book of Snobs*, is rather similar; but Thackeray's humour, in its very definite alternation of rather cruel satire with unalloyed pathos, is a very different thing from Goldsmith's, in which the satire is so gentle and so inextricable from a pathos so prevalent. The chapters on Beau Tibbs, great as they are, occur in the middle of a number of desultory essays, and are, on that account, perhaps, familiar to a smaller audience than *The Vicar of Wakefield*.

"The Vicar of Wakefield" (1766).

Of this immortal romance it is difficult to say more than that, in spite of its absurdly inconsistent plot and utter want of construction, it remains one of those rare gems which no lapse of time can tarnish. The gentle and quiet humour of the portrait of Dr. Primrose, the delicate yet vigorous contrasts of character in the other personages, the constant atmosphere of purity, cheerfulness, and gaiety—these, with the transparency and grace of the style, will render the story a classic for all time. It is, however, less a novel than a narrative; it is a picture of contemporary manners rather than an attempt at telling a story artistically; and it occupies no place in the evolution of the English novel—that is, unless we regard it as a backward step.

Goldsmith's admirable comedies appeared at a time when dramatic literature, if plentiful, was very unfruitful. *The Good-Natur'd Man* is an excellent comedy of manners; but Goldsmith was too good-tempered and too much in sympathy with his own hero to be successful in that kind of satire which is essential to such pieces, and we see his characteristic work most nearly in the laughable character of Croaker, and in the scene in which Honeywood, visited by Miss Richland, passes off the bailiffs in his house as his personal friends. But in *She Stoops to Conquer* we have a first-rate specimen of the comedy of intrigue, whose interest mainly depends upon a succession of lively and farcical incidents and lightly sketched pictures of eccentric character. Since the Orange period, there had not been so good a comedy on the English stage, and, with its constant merriment and its freedom from indelicacy, it has kept possession of the theatre down to our own day. In the scenes between Young Marlow and Miss Hardcastle, or the famous scene in which Tony Lumpkin, a character worthy of Vanbrugh, drives his mother round and round the horse-pond, and frightens her into believing that her husband is a highwayman, we see Goldsmith

Goldsmith's comedies: "The Good-Natur'd Man" (1768);

"She Stoops to Conquer" (1773).

divesting himself of his melancholy love of human nature, and revelling in the most pleasant and boisterous absurdities. In some of his lighter fugitive poems we are again face to face with this droller side of his humour. *The Haunch of Venison* is a model of easy narrative and an accurate sketch of commonplace society, and in the piece called *Retaliation* we have a series of slight yet delicate portraits of Goldsmith's most distinguished literary friends, drawn with vigorous and refined strokes. Garrick, Burke, and Reynolds appear; Johnson, Gibbon, and Boswell are conspicuous by their absence. Several of the songs and ballads scattered through his work are remarkable for their tenderness and harmony; and indeed, the best general praise that can be given to Goldsmith is to remark the exceptional way in which, while giving full play to his softer emotions, he avoided the pitfall of sickliness and effeminacy.

Humour of the shorter poems.

§ 17. The great writers whom we have mentioned in this chapter had their satellites; but neither these lesser novelists nor their novels are in any sense conspicuous. In 1744 SARAH FIELDING, the sister of the great novelist, brought out a book called *David Simple*, which, in construction and general tone, certainly belongs to the new class of novel, and, although not aspiring to more than a decent mediocrity, has a quiet humour and sentiment of its own. Miss Fielding published another volume of *David Simple* in 1752, and a translation of Xenophon's *Memorabilia* (1762), and lies buried at Bath. Seven years later, in the year of *Amelia* and *Peregrine Pickle*, a London lawyer called ROBERT PALTOCK went back to Defoe's manner in *The Life and Adventures of Peter Wilkins* (1751), an Antarctic Robinson Crusoe. And, in 1760, the first year of *Tristram Shandy*, CHARLES JOHNSTONE published his *Chrysal, or Adventures of a Guinea*, which, imitating Smollett in his most ferocious manner, was a severe satire on the sins and follies of the age. Its success led Johnstone to publish two supplementary volumes in 1765.

Minor novelists: SARAH FIELDING (1710–1768).

ROBERT PALTOCK (1697–1767).

CHARLES JOHNSTONE (*d.* 1800).

It will be noted that the last in date of the great novels is *Humphrey Clinker* (1771). Of other narratives and tales which appeared before this year, we shall speak in succeeding chapters. The novel did not win its way all at once, and, after the great epoch of production, from 1740 to 1751, it began to languish. In an age which had fully accepted the novel, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, with its close resemblance to the Addisonian narratives of Marivaux, would not have been possible. The seed which had been sown by Richardson and Fielding lay dormant until its awakening in the early years of the nineteenth century.

Temporary decline of the novel.

CHAPTER XVIII.

JOHNSON AND LATER EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY PROSE.

§ 1. SAMUEL JOHNSON: the literary dictator of his age. His early life and hack-work in London. § 2. The *Dictionary*. Johnson and Lord Chesterfield. § 3. *The Vanity of Human Wishes. Irene.* Johnson's essays. Decline of the essay in English. § 4. *Rasselas.* Johnson's escape from poverty. § 5. Meeting of Johnson and JAMES BOSWELL. The Club. Johnson's friendships. Tour in the Hebrides. § 6. *The Lives of the Poets.* Johnson's death and character. § 7. SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS: his artistic criticisms. § 8. LORD CHESTERFIELD'S *Letters to his Son.* § 9. DAVID HUME. Life and works. § 10. Hume's philosophical writings. The *History of England.* § 11. WILLIAM ROBERTSON: his historical work. § 12. EDWARD GIBBON. Life and character. § 13. The *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.* § 14. EDMUND BURKE: his life and style. § 15. The *Letters of Junius* and their supposed author. § 16. ADAM SMITH. The *Wealth of Nations.* § 17. SIR WILLIAM BLACKSTONE'S *Commentaries.* § 18. BUTLER'S *Analogy.* WARBURTON'S *Divine Legation.* WILLIAM PALEY. § 19. GILBERT WHITE. The *Natural History of Selborne.*

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709–1784). *Importance of his literary position.*

§ 1. THE supreme importance of SAMUEL JOHNSON in the literature of his century consists not so much in what he wrote as in the guardianship which he maintained for many years over English letters. By no fictitious or assumed right, but by virtue of an unfailing judgment and rigid taste, he reached a supremacy which all his contemporaries gladly acknowledged; and, having the good fortune to find in Boswell the best of biographers, his personal eccentricities and table-talk—the latter the most admirable in existence—have come down to posterity and given us an intimate acquaintance with the man himself which we enjoy with no other English writer. Moreover, his influence over the literary life of his day, although imperious, was not arrogant or domineering. He did not affect exclusiveness or aim at being the tyrant of a small society. He had raised himself from the poorest circumstances to the highest position to which he could aspire; and, all through his life, his criticism showed itself independent of mercenary feeling and ready to do justice to all who deserved it. In spite of his grimness, his bad manners, and his ugliness, his memory is that of the most

lovable of men, the most judicious of scholars, and the best of Christians.

His father was Michael Johnson, a poor and struggling bookseller at Lichfield; and it was in Lichfield that he was born in 1709. From his childhood he was disfigured and half blinded by the King's Evil, a form of scrofulous disorder, and, when he was only three years old, he was taken to London by his mother and touched for his malady by Queen Anne. The disease affected both his appearance and his temper; it seamed and deformed a naturally imposing face and figure, and afflicted him with strange and involuntary contortions, like St. Vitus' dance; while it reacted upon his mind and temper, saddling him with a constitutional indolence hostile to his genius and ambition and making him irritable, sombre, and despondent. He was educated in a desultory fashion, first at Lichfield Grammar School, and then at a small school at Stourbridge; but, for the most part, the foundation of his future learning was laid at home. When, in 1728, he went up to Pembroke College, Oxford — his charges were defrayed by a benevolent patron—he carried there an amount of scholarship very rare at his age. The exact length of his residence at Oxford is rather obscure. He went down finally in 1731; but he appears to have been in almost continual residence for fourteen months after his entrance, and then to have gone down for a long period. Although his father's death in 1731, and the hopeless poverty into which his family was thrown, prevented him from taking his degree, he was a conspicuous member of his college, witty, independent, and insubordinate, honouring his tutors with his esteem, but following their advice only where it suited himself; and, in subsequent years, he looked back upon Oxford with affection and loved to re-visit Pembroke. The death of his father, however, made him acquainted with misery. Out of the confusion of his affairs he received only £20 as his share of the inheritance, and this he generously and dutifully handed over to his mother. The only profession open to him was that of a schoolmaster, for which his personal appearance, his disposition, and the character of his acquirements, united to disqualify him. He became an usher, for the next four years or so, in various provincial schools; but his irritability and the hideous faces he made terrified the boys, and when he tried to set up a school on his own account at Edial, near Lichfield, the attempt was a failure. Meanwhile, in 1735, he had translated Father Lobo's *Voyage to Abyssinia*—his original was a French abbreviation of the Portuguese work—for a bookseller in Birmingham; and, in July of the same year, he had married Mrs. Porter, a widow old enough to be his mother, to whom, in spite of her defects of person and cultivation, he remained devotedly attached. Having ventured everything on the school at Edial, Johnson threw himself for support on litera-

His life: education.

Life at Oxford.

Early attempts at gaining a living.

ture, and, early in 1737, set off for London with one of his pupils, David Garrick, whose ambition was to go on the stage. The two arrived in London with fourpence between them. Johnson had with him the unfinished manuscript of his tragedy *Irene*. Garrick's success in his profession was speedy; but Johnson, with everything against him, began his tedious, and at times, almost hopeless career, at the lowest rung of the ladder, as a bookseller's hack. He wrote for various journals, but chiefly for Edward Cave's *Gentleman's Magazine*, which had been started in 1731; and, as an obscure labourer for the press, he furnished criticisms, prefaces, translations—in short, all kinds of humble literary work. Ultimately, from 1741 to 1744, Cave employed him as parliamentary reporter for his journal. The law at that time made the reproduction of the debates a penal offence, and the reports in *The Gentleman's Magazine* were lightly disguised under the title of "Debates in Magna Lilliputia," and fictitious names were found for the speakers.

Arrival in London and early experiences.

In the meantime Johnson's name, or, rather, his initials had appeared in print and won some popularity. The satire called *London* (1738) was a clever adaptation of Juvenal's third Satire, transferring to London and to contemporary life the invective launched by Juvenal against the neglect of letters in imperial Rome. The complaint of the humiliations which an honest man must encounter in the face of the welcome given to foreign quacks and native scoundrels was more sincere, perhaps, in Juvenal's hexameters than in Johnson's heroic couplets. However, Johnson's life at this time was as miserable as it well could be. He dined in a cellar on sixpennyworth of meat and a pennyworth of bread. In a note to his employer he signed himself, "Yours *impransus*.—S. Johnson." Yet, in all these tribulations, he remained dignified and severely honest. The toil and distress through which he passed may not have improved his manners, but they intensified his humanity and increased his self-respect. His chief companion in drudgery was the unfortunate poet Richard Savage, whose work he regarded with a somewhat exaggerated admiration. Savage died in 1743: and Johnson commemorated his friend in the eulogistic *Life of Mr. Richard Savage* (1744). It must be owned that here he showed himself blinded by friendship, for Savage was by no means an immaculate person; but the companionship of the pair in misfortune—they had often wandered about the streets at midnight, supperless and homeless—was some excuse for partiality. The biography became very popular, but the improvement in Johnson's circumstances was very slow. As he himself wrote, "Slow rises worth, by poverty depressed."

Publication of "London" (1738).

Friendship with Savage. "Life of Savage" (1744).

§ 2. From 1747 to 1755 the staple occupation of Johnson's life was the great *Dictionary of the English Language*, which supplied in England the place of the dictionaries of the French

and Spanish Academics, and, for years to come, was the standard of English style. Johnson, like most of his contemporaries, knew nothing of the Teutonic languages; and, in consequence, the etymological part of his work is without value; but his definitions are so accurate and comprehensive, and his quotations in support of each article so interesting and well chosen, that the book may always be read with pleasure. The quotations, in particular, are not chosen with the purely scientific motive which animated the compilers of the French and Spanish dictionaries in selecting their examples, but are so introduced that the *Dictionary*, apart from its original purpose, is a miscellany and commonplace-book of English prose and poetry, and is a book for the general reader as well as for the philologist. And the most remarkable point about the *Dictionary* is, that it is not the work of a richly endowed society, lasting over a number of years, but that it was completed within the short space of eight years, and by a single scholar who, constantly harassed by poverty and ill-health, undertook the laborious work for the love of his language, and that, considering its date and the imperfect state of knowledge then existing, it is the equal of any other work of the kind.

The "Dictionary" (1755).

The literary history of the *Dictionary* is very uneventful, save for one circumstance. The plan of the work was published in 1747, and its promise was fulfilled in 1755. The publishers paid £1575 for the copyright, which they advanced during the progress of the work. But, in seeking a patron for his undertaking, Johnson had inscribed his plan to the accomplished Lord Chesterfield, and apparently had received a *douceur* of ten pounds in reply. This acknowledgment, however, was the only notice which Chesterfield took of the project; and Johnson, it is said, after a few visits to his antechamber and a few repulses from his door, was disappointed of any further help. When the *Dictionary* appeared Chesterfield wrote two eulogistic articles upon it in *The World*; and on February 7, 1755, Johnson acknowledged the deferred kindness in a letter to his critic which, for studious irony and reticent indignation, has not its parallel in English. "I hope," he wrote, "it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron which Providence has enabled me to do for myself." The polite scorn of this letter—a "far-famed blast of doom," as Carlyle put it, to patronage in literature—is fully justified by a pathetic and manly passage in the Preface to the *Dictionary*. "It may gratify curiosity to inform it that the *English Dictionary* was written with little assistance of the learned, and without any patronage of the great; not in the soft obscurities of retirement or under the shelter of academic bowers, but

Episode of Johnson and Lord Chesterfield.

Johnson's account of the compilation of the "Dictionary."

amidst inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow. . . . I have protracted my work till most of those whom I wished to please have sunk into the grave, and success and miscarriage are empty sounds. I therefore dismiss it with frigid tranquillity, having little to fear or hope from censure or from praise."

§ 3. During the years devoted to the *Dictionary* Johnson sought diversion from time to time in other forms of writing. Thus, during a holiday in 1748, he wrote *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, which saw the light early in the following year. In this, as in his first poem, he took Juvenal as his model, and produced a magnificent and worthy adaptation of the tenth Satire, written in a lofty and solemn rhetorical manner. To Juvenal's historical examples, which he reproduced, he added several of his own, and thereby attested the kinship of his gloomy genius to that of his model. Side by side with the famous picture of the fall of Sejanus, which had attracted Ben Jonson so strongly nearly a century and a half before, he drew the parallel picture of Wolsey's disgrace, while Charles XII of Sweden became the companion of Hannibal. In the same year, 1749, Garrick, now manager of Drury Lane Theatre, produced Johnson's *Irene*, which had been partly written, as we have seen, before their arrival in London, and had been rejected since then by several theatres. The play brought its author some money, and ran for nine nights, but it was not a striking success. Its plot had neither interest nor probability, and the whole work consisted of a series of lofty moral declamations in Johnson's most laboured rhetoric, without any attempt at passion or discrimination of character. More than this, Johnson regarded stage directions as an interference with his work; and only extreme affection for his old schoolmaster could have induced Garrick to submit the piece to an audience.

Miscellaneous writings (1747–1755). "Vanity of Human Wishes" (1749).

Production of "Irene" (1749).

The mistaken opinion that Johnson's style was merely a vehicle of pompous expression, and that he always said a thing in six words where he could have said it in three, is partly justified by the sententiousness which clings to all his periods. As a matter of fact, his writing could be as terse and pointed as his conversation; and, had he not always kept his moral so obviously before his eyes, he might have avoided the risk of heaviness. It is this weight of style, with a monotonous and rather pedantic love of antithesis, that makes his essays dull reading. It was in 1750, as another diversion from the labour of the *Dictionary*, that he proceeded to follow in the steps of Addison and Steele. His periodical, *The Rambler*, began to appear in March, and came out twice a week during the next two years. Since the time of the great essayists no more notable contributions than Johnson's essays had been

Johnson's essays: their style.

"The Rambler" (1750–2).

added to this kind of writing; but, in grace and lightness of touch, his pen was a very unfaithful follower of Addison. He practically wrote all *The Rambler* himself; but one essay was procured from Richardson, then in the stage between *Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison*, and four others were written by three of the young ladies who were the most faithful disciples of the Johnsonian manner—Miss Talbot, Mrs. Carter, and Mrs. Chapone. Johnson's essays bear every mark of careful labour, but many of them were written very quickly and often were sent to the press without revisal. Later on, after the publication of the *Dictionary*, he wrote a series of essays called *The Idler* for Newbery's *Universal Chronicle* (1758–60), which show him in a better and less hortatory mood. In any case, the British essay, after Johnson, has no independent existence; and, by 1760, its influence upon English taste and literature was at an end. But the ten years between 1750 and 1760 produced, in addition to Johnson's essays, a crop of miscellaneous and generally feeble papers on the plan of *The Spectator*. Johnson himself wrote for *The Adventurer* of his friend and imitator, JOHN HAWKESWORTH (1715?–1773), which appeared twice a week from 1752 to 1754. Hawkesworth, who had known Johnson well in his Grub Street days, was also the editor of Swift (1754–5) and translator (1768) of Fénelon's *Aventures de Télémaque*, and wrote an account of Cook's voyages (1773). In 1753 EDWARD MOORE (1712–1757), the author of a tragedy, *The Gamester* (1753), brought out, with the assistance of Lord Chesterfield, Lord Lyttelton, Horace Walpole, and other distinguished persons, a weekly paper called *The World*, which lasted till 1756. And, from 1754 to 1756, the miscellaneous writer and translator of Plautus (1767), BONNELL THORNTON (1724–1768), joined with his friend George Colman the elder, himself the translator of Terence, in writing a third paper called *The Connoisseur*. All these minor publications show, in a greater or less degree, the same want of originality.

"The Idler" (1758–60).

Decline of the English essay.

§ 4. Johnson's wife had died in March, 1752. His mother's death followed in 1759; and, in order to raise funds for her funeral, he wrote with extraordinary rapidity the moral tale called at first *The Prince of Abyssinia*, but better known as *Rasselas*. In *Rasselas* there is more moral than tale; and the book, a series of admirably written dialogues and reflections, adds nothing to the history of the English novel. As a moral essay, and, in a more interesting and personal sense, as an expression of a judgment which had so strong and healthy an influence on English letters, *Rasselas* is still one of the great books of the last century; and we cannot wonder that, on its appearance, it enjoyed success. The very common habit of comparing it with Voltaire's *Candide* is to be attributed, perhaps, to the fact that the two books were

"Rasselas" (1759).

published within a month of each other; but, in any case, it is interesting to contrast two philosophical essays dealing with subjects something similar, but written by two men whose difference in every personal respect was increased by an entire divergency of tendency and manner.

All his life long Johnson had taken an interest in politics, and had written several pamphlets in which he maintained the doctrine of arbitrary rule with considerable prejudice, violence, and logic. His ardent Toryism led him, in his later years, to denounce the American rebellion with a curious narrowness of judgment that was at variance with his general breadth of opinion. By the time that he had written *Rasselas* he was well known as a moralist and poet; and, in 1762, when George III had succeeded to the throne and an unpopular government was trying to make itself better appreciated by showing some favour to art and letters, Lord Bute granted him an annual pension of £300. Thus, twenty-five years after his arrival in London, he was placed above the reach of poverty and was able to indulge, not only the natural indolence which made writing so disagreeable a task to him, but his delight in charity and benevolence. In spite of his poverty he had for some time maintained under his roof a strange assembly of pensioners on his bounty, whose only claims upon him were their infirmities and distress; and his pension enabled him to keep up this asylum far better than before. Among those who lived thus on his charity were the blind poetess Anna Williams, a Mrs. Desmoulins, and Robert Levett, a humble practitioner of medicine among the most miserable classes of London; and a thousand anecdotes are related of his generosity and unrelaxing kindness to these inmates, and of the unfailing patience with which, in spite of his own irritable temper, he bore their quarrels and complaints.

Grant of a pension to Johnson.

His charity.

§ 5. It was not long after this, in 1763, that Johnson met JAMES BOSWELL, and so fell into the hands of the prince of all biographers. Although Boswell's *Life of Johnson* did not appear till 1791, it is so inextricably connected with any account of Johnson himself that this is the place to mention its author. Boswell, himself a lovable but unstable person, who worshipped his hero so thoroughly that he had no time for self-respect, was the son of a Scotch law-lord, Boswell of Auchinleck in Ayrshire. With an intense reverence for literary persons, and an especial devotion to Johnson, "which had grown up in my fancy into a kind of mysterious veneration, by figuring to myself a state of solemn elevated abstraction, in which I supposed him to live in the immense metropolis of London," he had come up to that immense metropolis for three months in 1760, and had failed to meet his idol. The important meeting, however, took place on May 16, 1763, in the back

Meeting of Johnson with JAMES BOSWELL (1740–1795).

parlour of "Mr. Thomas Davies the actor, who then kept a bookseller's shop in Russell Street, Covent Garden"; and from that time forward a friendship, as of father and son, sprang up between the two men. "The motives and grounds of friendship," as Robert Louis Stevenson has said, "are not easy to discover." Boswell belonged to a nation against which Johnson felt a prejudice as resolute as his Toryism. He was vain, tattling, and frivolous, without tact or solid principle; but Johnson, touched by the sincere admiration shown him by this so differently constituted person, admitted him to an intimacy which must often have given exasperation to Johnson himself, but was, in the end, the origin of the rare and peculiar species of his immortality.

Foundation of the Club.

The beginning of what may be called the Boswellian period of Johnson's life—the twenty-one years in which his reputation grew till it overshadowed the field of English letters—almost coincides with the foundation of the celebrated Literary Club. The brilliant society which had gathered round Swift, Pope, Arbuthnot, and Bolingbroke in the first quarter of the century, was reproduced in its third quarter by this assembly of less audacious but more solid wits and critics, which included Johnson, Reynolds, Burke, and Goldsmith, and, among its later members, Boswell (elected in 1773), Charles James Fox, and Bishop Percy. The conversation and "wit combats" of these men were the delight of Boswell, who set himself the task of recording their *bons mots* and preserving every fragment he could collect, by hearsay or observation, of the manners and converse of his idol; and thus his book is not only a portrait of Johnson, but a picture of the intellectual society by which the Lexicographer was surrounded. In the meetings of the Club Johnson found his true place. He loved talking as much as he hated writing, and maintained his supremacy far more by the style of his conversation than by his prose. In fact his conversation was eminently literature, full of pregnant thoughts and apt illustrations expressed in a muscular and thoroughly colloquial idiom. He enjoyed nothing so much as an argument; and his use of paradoxical repartee to overwhelm opposition is one of the most remarkable features of his conversational skill. Hardly any subject was broached on which he had not something ingenious and admirable to say; and in this constant habit of observation and criticism he passed the brightest and happiest portion of his life. Among his chief friends at this period was Mr. Thrale, a rich brewer and member of Parliament, who, like most of his contemporaries, was filled with admiration for Johnson's various and imposing talents. Mrs. Thrale, an enthusiastic Welshwoman, famous for her own talents and her love of intellectual society, was one of the ladies who delighted most in Johnson's company, and, the year after his death, gave, in her *Anecdotes*

Johnson's conversation.

His friendship with the Thrales.

of Dr. Johnson, a most valuable addition to our knowledge of the great man. Johnson was continually an honoured guest at Thrale's town house, and at his villa at Streatham. The Thrales studied his comfort, nursed his sickness, forgave his coarseness of manner, and, down to the time of Mr. Thrale's death, treated him with the utmost friendship and respect. This connection, which lasted about eighteen years, brought him into good society: he made excursions with his friends to different parts of England, and, in 1775, went with them as far as Paris. During this time his literary work, of course, languished. In 1765 he brought out a new edition of Shakespeare, over which he had been busy for several years. He was hardly an ideal editor of Shakespeare, for no one could have had less in common with the romantic drama; while a very slight acquaintance with the literature of Shakespeare's age made him a very inefficient commentator. Even with these defects, however, his penetration and common-sense triumphed from time to time; and his selection from the commentaries of preceding annotators is sensible and judicious.

Edition of Shakespeare (1765).

From 1765 to 1768 Boswell was absent from Johnson's side, during part of which interval, going abroad, he sat at the feet of Rousseau and Paoli. The result of his travels was *An Account of Corsica* (1768). It was not till 1773 that, moved by Boswell's entreaties and by his own curiosity, Johnson undertook the famous expedition to the Hebrides. The journey had, in those days, the enterprising air of an African exploration; but the two oddly assorted friends performed their voyage in safety, and, in the following year, took a less hazardous trip to North Wales. In 1775 appeared Johnson's account of his *Journey to the Western Islands*. His Highland excursion had not merely given him a good opportunity for observing a region entirely new to him and not often visited by travellers, but had helped to scatter many of his old prejudices against Scotland and the Scots. The volume which contains his impressions of Scottish travel is interesting and characteristic, but is, it is needless to say, a far less vivid picture of the journey than Boswell's description of the same event.

Johnson and Boswell in the Hebrides.

§ 6. In 1775 Johnson received an honour which he esteemed most highly—the Oxford degree of LL.D. He was now at the summit of his fame; and his out-spoken opinion on letters is found at this time in his criticisms on Macpherson's *Ossian*, which attached a lasting suspicion to that doubtful revival of Celtic poetry, and made him a bitter enemy. It was also in 1775 that he refused to acknowledge the justice of the American revolt, and published his pamphlet on this subject, *Taxation no Tyranny*. But, although he was now in his sixty-eighth year, his strength seemed only to grow; and, from 1777 to 1780, he was busy writing his *Lives of the Poets*. This series of critical biographies

Johnson made LL.D.

sprang from an agreement to write, for certain publishers, a few lines of preface to a projected collection of English poets. Each preface, however, grew into a considerable essay; and, when the collection was published, the *Lives* appeared separately in four volumes (1779–1781). The publishers' plan confined itself to the poets from Waller and Cowley to Johnson's immediate contemporaries and consequently, there is no mention of the great poets of the early Renaissance and the age of Elizabeth. While we find a great deal about Denham or Roscommon and those poets whose work is essentially minor, the greatest names in the catalogue are Milton, Butler, Dryden, Pope, and Gray. But Johnson's tastes and appreciations were so formed that they could deal far better with the poets of a stilted and unpoetic age than with the lyric and romantic poetry of earlier date. As it was, that gigantic literary error, his life of Milton, shows that, in occupying himself with poets of natural and imaginative genius, Johnson, even had he cordially approved of their politics, would have been out of his element; and his edition of Shakespeare, in which he could have been moved by no party bias, is a conclusive proof of the same thing. The artificial, classical poetry of the seventeenth century, however—all, in short, that lies within the confines of the heroic couplet—could have found no better or more discerning admirer and critic. So far as this is concerned, *The Lives of the Poets* is one of the most just and entertaining books of criticism in English, and remains a living monument to Johnson's common-sense and immense knowledge of life. One is tempted to say that, even where the perversity of his taste led him into errors of judgment, the fault is so entirely characteristic of himself that it may be forgiven him. He incorporated with his work the previously written *Life of Savage*. *The Lives of the Poets*, as a whole, shows Johnson's style at his best. The heaviness and pedantry which had hampered his earlier books are here refined into a sonorous dignity. The sentences are neat, clean, and perfect in construction, although, for this reason, they are obviously rather monotonous. In spite of his abundant sense of humour, Johnson's view of his duties towards the English language was very solemn and prevented him from writing with any great vivacity. At the same time this identical sense of duty coloured his style and gave it a life of its own; his English, as time went on, freed itself from the cut-and-dried habit of antithesis—"all see-saw between *that* and *this*," as Pope said of Hervey—and paid full recognition to the virtues of idiom. In *The Lives of the Poets* we see the ripe fruit of the labour which constructed the *Dictionary*.

"The Lives of the Poets" (1779–81).

Limitations of Johnson's criticism.

Style of "The Lives of the Poets."

The *Lives* was the last work of his life. Three years later, on December 13, 1784, after suffering severely from dropsy and

a complication of disorders, he died at his house in Bolt Court, attended to the last by his friends, and regretted by the whole of England. In his last moments the dread of death, which had tormented him through all his blameless life, gave way to calm and resignation. Boswell survived him by eleven years, and published the *Life of Johnson* in 1791. This had been preceded, in 1786, by the *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*, and, in 1785, by Mrs. Thrale's—or, as she is better known, Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*. The literature which grew up round Johnson's memory was augmented by the posthumous issue of some of his own writings. His *Prayers and Meditations*, the manuscript copy of which is in the library at Pembroke College, was published in 1785; a volume of *Sermons* came out in 1788; and, as late as 1816, his *Diary in North Wales*, recording the tour of 1774. Nothing tended to keep his memory alive so strongly as the strength and decision of his opinions, and the admirable paradoxes of his character. A Tory and High Churchman by conviction, he carried his attitude to the extent of prejudice and bigotry; at the same time his conduct to his friends and fellowmen was charity itself. His religion did not preserve him, on the one hand, from excessive credulity, nor, on the other, from those doubts which may beset the most orthodox. His tenderness of heart and moral purity existed beneath a coarseness and roughness of manner which made him not only bearish in argument but, unless to those who knew him well, insupportable in society. But his boorishness was but the outer veil of his goodness and gentleness; and the real man lives for us without exaggeration of his virtues or defects in the simply-written and unsurpassable biography which his wisdom and humanity inspired and fill with their examples.

Johnson's death and posthumous reputation.

Boswell's "Life of Dr. Johnson" (1791).

Character of Johnson.

§ 7. The friend, next to Boswell, with whom Johnson's life was most closely bound up, was SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. Reynolds, on returning from his Italian studies in 1752, soon became a friend of Johnson. It was his well-known portrait of the Lexicographer, painted some three years later, that gave Boswell his first idea of Johnson's appearance, and has since then proved the most valuable of companions to the *Life*. It was Reynolds who, in 1764, was responsible for the foundation of the Club of which Johnson was the chief ornament; and it was to Reynolds that Boswell very fitly inscribed his great work. We know Sir Joshua chiefly as the greatest of English painters and as the first President of the Royal Academy; and his life, from its beginning to its end, was devoted to his art; but we must not forget that, in the ring of literary men which surrounded Johnson, his place was very conspicuous, and that, under Johnson's influence, he himself wrote an admirable style. The serious body of his work consists, as might naturally be

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS (1723–1792).

expected, of artistic criticism, contained in the fifteen *Discourses*, which, as President of the Academy, he delivered between his election in 1768 and his death in 1792. These lectures, with their definite doctrine and theory of art, were the first attempt in England to establish any standard of this kind of æsthetic criticism, and, being very readable, succeeded with the public. The importance of Reynolds as the Ruskin of the eighteenth century cannot be over-estimated, although his style, excellent as it is, is little more than correct and sensible. The *Discourses* were published separately, and formed the nucleus of a collected edition of his works which Malone brought out in 1797. The remainder of the volume consisted of fragmentary criticisms and notes of a journey made in the Low Countries in 1771. In 1815 his niece published the *Johnson and Garrick*, or, to give it its longer title, *Dialogues in Imitation of Dr. Johnson's Conversation*, which are a witty and faithful reproduction of the Doctor's manner.

His "Discourses" and miscellaneous work.

§ 8. Johnson was the critic of literature, Reynolds of art—both of them thorough-going in their profession. In acute contrast to these stands the typical dilettante of his day, PHILIP DORMER STANHOPE, fourth EARL OF CHESTERFIELD, the cynical critic of men and manners. Fifteen years older than Johnson, he was, when Johnson came to town, the most conspicuous of the fashionable wits. The unfortunate details of his acquaintance with Johnson have already been related. He was an ugly little man with badly discoloured teeth, and by no means the ideal beau in appearance. He was at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, in his youth, where he devoted himself to study; but, on coming of age, he entered the House of Commons, and both there and in the House of Lords, to which he was promoted by his father's death in 1726, he proved himself an excellent orator. His life was chiefly spent in foreign embassies and in political affairs. He was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in 1745, and Secretary of State in 1746; and at no time was he a prolific writer. He wrote now and then for periodicals; but these occasional essays, collected some four years after his death, are now practically forgotten. But he had all the talent of an acute observer and was swift to make deductions from persons and affairs. The result of his unmatched worldly wisdom is seen in the *Letters to his Son*, which were published in 1774, soon after his death. These extraordinary communications, which recommend the pursuit of elegant manners and accomplishments at something like the expense of morality, or, at all events, with the most economical use of virtue, have, in consequence, a not very agreeable reputation; and Johnson's criticism, that they taught the morals of a courtesan and the manners of a dancing-master, although it may be put down in part to its

LORD CHESTERFIELD (1694–1773).

"Letters to his Son" (1774).

author's bitter reminiscence of his previous dealings with the Earl, has never been forgotten. Each letter, however, is a masterpiece of clear-cut style; and in the use of epigram without false affectation Chesterfield has no equal. The son for whose use the letters were written was illegitimate; and Chesterfield seems to have regarded him with the utmost affection, for, strange as it may seem, there is a genuine anxiety at the root of these heartless compositions. However, Philip Stanhope was a dull, good-natured person, who profited very little by his father's instructions, and disappointed his astute mentor. The morality which Johnson had so thoroughly introduced into English prose made the cynicism of Chesterfield's letters, at their appearance, rather notorious. However, in the present day, their study can do no moral harm, while their style is a vehicle of the best taste in English; and, as a matter of fact, their tone, at its best and worst, is photographed in the admirable sentence of Sainte-Beuve: "If Horace had a son, I imagine that he would address him in this way and no other."

§ 9. The pioneer of historical writing in England was DAVID HUME. At the same time he claims our attention as a great philosopher. His family had long been settled in Berwickshire; but he himself was born in Edinburgh and educated at the University. Although he showed no particular readiness in his boyhood, he seems always to have had an inclination for literature; and, after hesitating between the law and commerce, he abandoned both, and went abroad for some years. In his retirement with the Jesuit community at La Flèche he began to cultivate moral science and metaphysics and to prepare himself for his future labours. His intellectual tendency was naturally sceptical, and his calm and philosophical view of life led him into rejecting the principles of revealed religion. In 1737 he came back to England and settled down to a period of study and writing at Ninewells in Berwickshire. The first two volumes of *A Treatise of Human Nature* were published in 1739, and the third volume in 1740; the *Essays, Moral and Political*, appeared in 1741 and 1742. In spite of his calmness of temperament he was disappointed with the reception which these works met; but, although he gained very little by them, they at least made him some friends. Philosophy is never a lucrative pursuit, and Hume had no other means of subsistence. In 1745 he undertook the painful and uncongenial office of taking charge of the young Marquess of Annandale, who was insane. But, in the next year, some of his friends who recognised his talent procured him a secretaryship to General St. Clair, who was then about to proceed to Canada. St. Clair's expedition ended in an attack on Port L'Orient. He was appointed military envoy to Vienna and Turin in 1748, and again took Hume with him. In 1749 Hume returned to Berwickshire and

DAVID HUME (1711–1776).

remained in retirement for three years more, publishing the *Principles of Morals* in 1751 and the *Political Discourses* in 1752. This last book really attracted notice; and in the year of its publication he became Librarian to the Faculty of Advocates in Edinburgh. For the next eleven years he lived with his sister in the Scottish capital and occupied himself with his *History of England*. The original plan of this famous book embraced only the Stewart period from 1603 to 1688, and the first instalment (1754) contained the reigns of James I and Charles I. It was received very coldly; and Hume, disgusted with his failure in impressing the public, had serious thoughts of changing his name and leaving the country for good. But, as time went on, the plan grew; and, with its growth, the book was no longer neglected. An intermediate instalment appeared in 1759. Meanwhile, in 1757, he had published his *Four Dissertations*, including *The Natural History of Religion*. The last volumes of the *History* belong to 1761. In its complete form it covered the whole of English history from the coming of Cæsar to the Revolution, and was immediately recognised as a prose classic. Its popularity reacted upon his earlier works, which, although their pronounced deism excited ardent hostility, began to extend themselves beyond Hume's inner circle. His reputation was now solidly established. He was again employed as a secretary of embassy, and, in 1763, accompanied Lord Hertford to Paris. Parisian society was then under the sway of the encyclopædists, and Hume, whose philosophical works had naturalised French scepticism in England, found himself well received and courted by the fashion, although, apart from his intellectual merits, he was an uninteresting person, fat and heavy, unready in conversation and slow at repartee, and economical almost to parsimony. His life in Paris lasted for rather more than two years; and, in 1767, he became Under-Secretary of State. In 1769 he retired with a pension to Edinburgh, and lived there for the rest of his life, enjoying great tranquillity and surrounded with respect and affection. He left, in the last year of his life, a short autobiography in which there is an impartially just portrait of his own character: "A man of mild dispositions, of command of temper, of an open, social, and cheerful humour, capable of attachment, but little susceptible of enmity, and of great moderation in all my passions." In spite of the coldness which we see in this picture, and its reflection in Hume's own style, he seems to have been loved by his friends, and, as he again says, "Though I wantonly exposed myself to the rage of both civil and religious factions, they seemed to be disarmed in my behalf of their wonted fury."

Publication of the "History of England" (1754–1762).

Hume's life in Paris.

His retirement, death, and character.

§ 10. As a metaphysician and critic of morality Hume is the apostle of the utilitarian theory. His philosophical doctrines

are scattered through his various books; but the rudiments of his system are contained in the *Treatise of Human Nature* (1738) and its abridgment, the *Philosophical Essays Concerning Human Understanding* (1748). His attempt was to deduce the operations of the mind entirely from the two sources of impressions and ideas, which he regarded as distinct, and to deny the existence of any fundamental difference between actions on the ground of their virtue or vice. Disregarding these terms, he divided human actions into those which are of assistance to the welfare of the individual or mankind generally, and into those which are directly opposed to it. In other words, he asserted the principle of Utility as the only satisfactory solution of the problem which seeks to discover the essential difference between good and evil. Naturally, the orthodox listened to his arguments with dissatisfaction; but the controversialist has seldom had to encounter a tougher adversary than Hume, whose style, lucid in the extreme, veiled an extreme subtlety of argument beneath an air of philosophic candour. Without assenting to his conclusions, we must admit that his method of stating them is incontrovertible; while his intellect was so well equipped that none of his opponents found themselves able to attack him on all sides of his defence. His scepticism is generally connected with his *Essay on Miracles*, which was ingeniously answered by Paley in the *Evidences of Christianity*. Hume's objection to miracles was stated on two propositions: first, that it is contrary to all human experience that miracles should be true, since both reason and fact tend to show that the natural laws governing all physical phenomena are invariable; and, secondly, that the improbability of a miracle having ever taken place is far greater than the improbability that the testimony to such an event is false, since there is an antecedent probability that the witnesses may either have been duped themselves or may have duped those on whose record the truth of the miracle is founded.

Hume's philosophy.

The "Essay on Miracles."

As a metaphysician Hume is doubtless greater than as an historian. But the *History of England* was the first attempt in English at a really systematic and scientific history, and still retains a prominent place among books of the kind. Its style is entirely elegant. With no command of colour, Hume put his dry facts beautifully and in a pure English which he scrupulously refined and pared down until it assumed a considerable appearance of fluency. In his analysis of character and his sense of the proportion of events Hume's philosophic clearness of view make him one of the best of historians, and raise the merits of his work above its defects. But these defects are serious. The industrious Hume cannot be accused of indolence; but he was certainly contented to take his facts at second-hand from his predecessors without troubling himself as to their accuracy. He related

The "History of England."

legendary and half-mythological stories with the same air of belief that he gave to the better authenticated events of recent times—a fault pardonable enough in Herodotus or Livy, but less venial in a writer who ought to have applied his powerful critical faculty to the sifting of truth from traditions. As a classicist of the type of Voltaire and Diderot, he felt too great a contempt for the monastic chroniclers to think of consulting their authority or of separating their germs of fact from the mass of imaginative detail with which they covered history. Moreover, the history of England is essentially the history of religious and political conflict. Hume was indifferent to religion, and in politics he was as strong a Tory as Johnson, and a partisan of arbitrary government. He was a member of the Scottish aristocratic class, which was, as a rule, almost uniformly Jacobite. Thus, by a singular paradox, the sceptical reasoner strongly sympathised with systems directly opposed to his own doctrines; and, while explaining away the mistakes of the Stewarts and even showing on their behalf a tenderness for Romanism, he exhibited an indifference, strange in a man of his nature, to the heroism and patriotism of the Parliamentary party in the Civil War.

Hume's political bias.

§ 11. Ten years younger than Hume was his countryman WILLIAM ROBERTSON, whose historical work was contemporary with the last twenty years of Hume's life. Robertson was the son of a Presbyterian minister at Borthwick, near Edinburgh, and was himself educated for the Presbyterian ministry at Edinburgh University. In 1743 he was ordained to the parish of Gladsmuir in East Lothian, and quickly rose to celebrity as a preacher and as a champion of the moderate party in the General Assembly of the Kirk. His *History of Scotland*, embracing the reigns of Mary Queen of Scots and James VI down to the year 1603, was published in 1759, and was a great addition to his fame. He was appointed one of the ministers of Greyfriars' Church in Edinburgh, and, in 1762, was elected Principal of the University; in addition to this honour George III made him Royal Historiographer for Scotland. In 1769 he proceeded to publish his *History of the Reign of Charles V*, and, in 1777, his *History of the Discovery and Colonisation of America*. Later, in 1791, appeared his *Historical Disquisition concerning the Knowledge which the Ancients had of India*. There is a strong resemblance between the styles of Hume and Robertson, who were friends and members of the same circle; but Robertson had a gift of picturesque writing which is absent from Hume's work. However, this was not always the case; and there are passages in Robertson which are the reverse of vivid, and are as matter-of-fact as anything in Hume. He suffered, too, from one serious drawback. He lived all his life in Scotland, and, speaking and thinking in the Lowland dialect, naturally found that writing in English practically

WILLIAM ROBERTSON (1721–1793).

Robertson's style.

necessitated the use of an artificial and laboured style. No man who chose episodes in history of so dramatic a kind as the reigns of Mary Stewart and Charles V, or the adventures of Columbus and the Conquistadores in the far West, could fail to write of them with enthusiasm; and Robertson's warmth—the delight in his work of no ordinary historian—led him occasionally into romantic inaccuracies and theatrical details. These, however, are not positively without justification. His works on *Charles V* and *America*—which, in view of their influence on subsequent historians, and of their considerable value in our own day, have an unique importance—were not written without immense research; but the necessary Spanish authorities were, in Robertson's time, almost inaccessible, and he had to depend upon Latin histories and French memoirs. For example, the story of Charles' retirement to Yuste was a mere fact in history, of which the details were obscure; and even Prescott, whose acquaintance with Spanish histories and manuscripts was very extensive, in adding a supplementary account of Charles' last years to Robertson's book, fell into inaccuracies; while the whole story of Cortés in Mexico and Pizarro in Peru rested from the beginning on highly coloured and discrepant accounts, and, in Prescott's hands, again, became more romantic than in Robertson's. However, the fact remains that Robertson was the first of those historians who paid scientific attention to the thrilling history of the greatness of the Spanish empire, and that he was definitely responsible for the picturesque and vivid narratives of his fellow-countryman, Sir William Stirling-Maxwell, and the two great Americans, Prescott and Motley.

Character of his inaccuracy.

Influence of his "Charles V" and "America" on subsequent historians.

§ 12. The work of these very able historians brings us naturally to the immortal name of EDWARD GIBBON, the greatest of English historians, who was born at Putney. He was twenty-six years younger than Hume and sixteen younger than Robertson. His family was old and of good standing. His grandfather had been a rich merchant; but his father, who had been the pupil of William Law, the devotional writer, had wasted his patrimony. Gibbon's health, during his early youth, was extremely precarious, and he owed the gradual improvement of his constitution, as well as his early education, to his maternal aunt, Catherine Porten. He was sent for a short time to Westminster School, and afterwards took casual lessons with one or two private tutors; but his weak health prevented him from acquiring a solid foundation of learning, and led him, on the other hand, into a course of desultory reading. He was not quite fifteen when his father, thinking him somewhat stronger, sent him to Magdalen College, Oxford. There he spent fourteen months, "the most idle and unprofitable of my whole life." Learning in the college—the reproach is not confined to Magdalen—was only half alive.

EDWARD GIBBON (1737–1794). *Life.*

The fellows dozed on their incomes and did no work. Gibbon gave himself up to a course of controversial reading; and was led, by studying Middleton's *Free Enquiry* and the works of Bossuet, to join the Church of Rome. He thus ceased *ipso facto* to be a member of the University. The authorities at Magdalen promptly took his name off the books; and his father, horrified at his conversion, resorted to the radical measure of exposing him to the arguments of the deistical bookseller, David Mallet, Bolingbroke's friend and publisher. These proved useless, and the refractory youth was sent off to Lausanne, where he boarded with a Swiss pastor, M. Pavillard, and remained for five years. M. Pavillard's arguments so far prevailed as to bring him back to a nominal Protestantism; but, for the rest of his life, his religious belief was little more than a kind of philosophical deism. While in Switzerland he began that course of regular and systematic study which gradually filled his mind with limitless stores of sacred and profane learning; and at this time, too, his mind acquired that strong sympathy with French modes of thought which makes him one of the least national of our great authors. His stay at Lausanne is also memorable for his love-affair with Susanne Curchod, who afterwards became the wife of Necker and the mother of Madame de Staël; but he was not an ardent lover, and his father, in ordering him to give up the idea of marriage, found him this time an obedient son. He returned to England in 1758, and became a captain in the Hampshire militia; but, during his three and a half years of military service, he found means to continue his studies, and published, in 1761, his first book, the little French essay *Sur l'Étude de la Littérature*. At the same time he did not neglect to study his military tactics, and, as he acknowledged later in life, his experience in the militia was of great use to the narrative of innumerable wars in his history. In 1763 he left England again and travelled in France, Switzerland, and Italy. "It was at Rome," he wrote, "on the 15th of October, 1764, as I sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, while the barefooted fryars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter, that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started into my mind." The sudden shock of conception felt in the sunset of that eventful day determined the great work of his life. He came home in 1765 and set strenuously to work on the composition of his history, labouring secretly and saying nothing of it to his friends. He was distracted now and then from the work of preparation by other ideas, and his *Critical Observations on the Sixth Book of the Æneid* took him into controversy; but the *History* still was his ruling idea. His father died in 1770; and in 1772 he went to live in London and began the actual work of writing the great book.

Early life at Lausanne.

His life in the Hampshire militia.

Genesis of the "Decline and Fall."

In 1774 he entered Parliament as member for Liskeard. His political career was a discreet silence, for both modesty and vanity prevented him from trying his fortune as a speaker; but he consistently supported the ministry with his vote during the whole course of the American War and down to the formation of the Coalition cabinet. Lord North rewarded his fidelity with the post of a Lord Commissioner of Trade, which he retained from 1779 to 1782. Meanwhile, in 1776, the first volume of the *Decline and Fall* had been published, and was an immediate success. Hume, then in the last year of his life, praised it: his criticism was echoed by the world of fashion; the beaux of the town and the ladies read, or, at least, bought it; and the orthodox were scandalised by the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters. Gibbon has related the hesitation, almost the terror, with which the immense extent and difficulty of his enterprise at first filled him, and the fastidious care with which he revised and rewrote the opening chapters, writing the first and last two chapters three times, and the second and third twice over, before he was satisfied with the style; but, as he advanced, the various parts of his subject took form and symmetry, and the increasing facility of composition enabled him to advance quickly and steadily. The second and third volumes followed the first in 1781.

Gibbon in Parliament.

Gradual publication of the "Decline and Fall."

However, the book was not finished in England. In 1783 Gibbon found his expenses heavier than before. His post and its emoluments had been abolished in 1782; and he determined to settle altogether at Lausanne. He bought a comfortable house on the shores of Lake Leman, and, establishing himself there, spent the happiest part of his life in tranquil devotion to his mighty task, and in the companionship of an old friend, M. Deyverdun. One night—it was the 27th of June, 1787—he left the last page of his work a little before midnight, and, walking in the moonlight along a covered walk of acacias that lay above the lake, realised, with simultaneous joy and regret, that the immense task, conceived nearly twenty-three years before, was over. The year after, in 1788, the last three volumes were published. There is little more to tell. The agitation which the French Revolution communicated to the surrounding countries, drove him, in 1793, from Lausanne: he came back to London and died there the following year. His character may be studied at length in the famous *Autobiography*, which his friend Lord Sheffield published in 1795 from the collation of six separate manuscripts—a document whose pomposity and egoism are excusable and even delightful when we consider the importance of the literary achievement it supplements. He does not seem to have been, either in person or manner, very attractive. His disposition was cold and somewhat selfish; and his vanity was not altogether concealed by his good breeding and know-

Later life at Lausanne.

Character.

ledge of the world. Yet his immense acquirements and refined manners made his conversation much desired. He was a prominent member of the brilliant intellectual circle which surrounded Johnson and Burke ; and he was generous, benevolent, and constant in his affections. All his life long he remained faithful to his early fancy for Madame Necker, and never married. This was, however, the result of sentiment rather than of passion.

§ 13. The *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* is one of the greatest monuments of industry and genius in the world. The task which Gibbon undertook, to give a connected narrative of the greatest of all empires in its lingering ruin, was colossal. After an introductory sketch of Roman history from the time of Augustus—which, by itself, is a noble piece of philosophical research—he began with the death of Marcus Aurelius in 180 A.D., and went continuously on to the fall of Constantinople in 1453. This space of more than twelve hundred years included not only the manhood and decrepitude of the Roman empire, but the barbarian invasions of Europe, the separate establishment of the Byzantine power, the reorganisation of the European nations, the foundation of the religious and political system of Mohammedanism, and the Crusades. So enormous an undertaking rendered indispensable a most vast and accurate knowledge of the whole range of classical, Byzantine, medieval, and Oriental literature ; and, further, it demanded a breadth of view which should embrace, clearly and philosophically, some of the greatest religious and social changes in the history of mankind —the rise of Christianity, the Mussulman dominion, and the institutions of feudalism and chivalry. The extent of the work was thus augmented by its complexity, and by the nature of the chief authorities. The Byzantine annals and the Oriental chroniclers had to be sifted painfully, and facts had to be carefully extracted from the partial and hyperbolical accounts of prejudiced historians. From this immense chaos was to be deduced light, order, and regularity ; the historian was to be familiar with philosophy, science, politics, and the art of war. Gibbon's experience in the Hampshire militia and the House of Commons proved of no small service to him in the two last respects. By his observation and attention to duty he learned the rare art of bringing home to our sympathies and understanding the sentiments and actions of remote ages and distant peoples. All his pictures have thus a vivid, life-like tone ; they pass before us in a splendid panoramic procession. No writer, moreover, has ever brought to a great subject a style so thoroughly appropriate. Gibbon wore his garment of style like a priest at a great ceremony. In the early portion of his work he found it a little irksome ; it was new to him, chosen for the occasion. and it had been constructed

The "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" (1776–1788): its subject and extent.

Gibbon's style.

on a foreign principle. But, as the rite proceeded, and he found himself enthralled by its solemnity, his vestment sat more lightly on him, and he lost his restlessness, rising promptly to the great occasion. This agreement of the robe with the ceremony, and Gibbon's appreciation of the stateliness of his task, raise the book to one of the highest places in literature. The pompous periods of the style, its elaborate ornament, its roll of sonorous cadences, are common to every page of the work ; the sound and glitter fascinate us from beginning to end. Gibbon's peculiar mannerisms become familiar—his love of antithesis and epigram, his preference for words of Latin origin—but they are never monotonous. It is said that he was at first doubtful whether to write in French or English ; eventually he chose a middle course, and wrote in a dialect of English which has far more of the Latin than the Teutonic element, and can be translated into French, phrase by phrase, with very little alteration. In his search after elegance he was so fastidious that, to avoid the repetition of a name or phrase, after too near an interval, he would escape the difficulty by using some periphrasis or incidental allusion to express what he wished. This, demanding a degree of knowledge which few people possess, is often the cause of obscurity ; and in this way Gibbon is to blame for a fault which has been the bane of succeeding writers, and, now that it has found its way into the modern newspaper, is become positively odious. His descriptions of battles and nations, his characters of individuals, are always wonderfully life-like : his chief sin against good taste was his love for gorgeousness and brilliant colour, and his consequent tendency to exaggeration. He was especially attracted by the sensuous and material aspect of things ; and his appreciation of morality, compared with his susceptibility to outward grandeur, is very slight. This distinguishes the pomposity of Gibbon from the pomposity of Johnson. Johnson exercised his heaviest periods on moral qualities : Gibbon was never so magniloquent as when he was describing the picturesque colour of an Oriental court or the conquests of a great sovereign or nation.

Its pictorial character.

Gibbon's famous attack on Christianity at the end of his first volume is all the more dangerous in that it can scarcely be considered an attack. The experiences of his early youth led him into a quiet rationalism, in which all forms of religion assumed equal proportions. His attitude was critical and scornful : he saw the vices of any dogmatic system of religion sooner than its virtues. Thus, he did not formally deny the evidence on which the structure of Christianity is founded, but indirectly included it in the same category with the pagan mythologies. The rapid spread of the faith he imputed to secondary causes ; and, in relating the corruptions, persecutions, and superstitions which, so soon after its foundation, menaced the Church of Christ in

Gibbon's attitude to Christianity.

its own bosom, he took the explicit view that these were less the consequences of human crime, folly, and ambition, than the necessary results of the system itself. It is a mistake to treat his argument as a propagandist onslaught on religion; it is simply the clear impartial opinion of a philosopher to whom religion was a method of logic and not a matter of sentiment. What, to Christians, is an abuse of religion, appealed to Gibbon as a logical and inevitable consequence. Byron described him as—

> "Sapping a solemn creed with solemn sneer;
> The lord of irony—that master-spell."

The very solemnity of his sneer made it a dangerous weapon in the hands of active enemies of Christianity; and it is but natural that his candid criticism should, in time, have won the reputation of a deliberate attempt to undermine the faith of his readers. His opponents accused him of having intentionally distorted facts and of having garbled his authorities; the *Vindication* (1779), however, in which he replied to them fortified his assertions and deductions behind a rampart of full and complete references and quotations, and offered few weak points to his adversaries. The opinion of Guizot, whom no one could accuse of indifference to religion, is final and conclusive on this point.

The *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* remains, and will remain, the supreme authority on the subject. Hume and Robertson, as historians, are now superseded: their value remains, but with secondary authority. But Gibbon is still one of the greatest of historical masters. He has not been exempt from unfavourable criticism; but this has touched him only on the side of his style and in the hands of critics to whom his classical periods have been distasteful. To-day his style finds no assailant worthy of the name. In historical details his authorities may have led him wrong here and there; or again, he may have had no access to certain sources of information. He has been blamed for giving a lurid picture of the lives and family relations of the later Byzantine emperors; but the humanity of his detractors has proved no important fact on behalf of their *protégés*. And although much work, especially of late years, has been devoted to this fascinating and dramatic chapter of the world's history, Gibbon has suffered no injury by it. All subsequent labour serves only as an exhaustive commentary, elucidating the obscurities of this splendid masterpiece, and enhancing the magnificence of its immortal style.

Immortality of the "Decline and Fall."

§ 14. The name of EDMUND BURKE already has been mentioned more than once in connection with Johnson and the literary society of his day. Burke, with his powerful and versatile genius, carried the fervour and imagery of a great orator into philosophical discussion, and united in himself the highest qualities

EDMUND BURKE (1729–1797).

of the writer, statesman, and philosopher. His predominant quality was a burning and dazzling enthusiasm for any object which, at the moment, attracted his sympathies; and into the service of this ardour he impressed all the disciplined forces of his logic, his learning, and his historical and political knowledge. His sympathy was indeed usually excited by generous pity for misfortune, and horror at cruelty and injustice; but, as in the case of his rupture with Fox, his splendid oratorical display in the impeachment of Warren Hastings, and his furious denunciation of the French Revolution, the very excess of his tenderness made him cruel, and the very vehemence of his detestation of injustice made him unjust. He was the son of a Dublin attorney, who sent him to school with Abraham Shackleton, a Quaker schoolmaster at Ballitore, co. Kildare. In 1743 he entered Trinity College, Dublin, where he held a scholarship and was the founder of the famous Historical Society. In 1750 he came to England and entered the Middle Temple. After some short study he gave up the idea of proceeding to the bar, and devoted himself to miscellaneous writing. In 1756 he married his doctor's daughter, a Miss Nugent, and published two essays. One of these was the *Vindication of Natural Society*, in which, employing Bolingbroke's style with clever irony, he attacked the Bolingbrokian philosophy; in the other, the *Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas on the Sublime and Beautiful*, he betook himself to æsthetic criticism. Three years later, in 1759, he became editor of Dodsley's *Annual Register*, for which he continued to write for nearly thirty years.

Life.

Burke's political career began in 1759, when he became private secretary to Hamilton, made, in 1761, Secretary for Ireland. He held this post till 1764. In 1765 he was appointed private secretary to Lord Rockingham, and entered the House of Commons as member for Wendover. The Whigs soon found in him their most able supporter; and, during the long struggle with Lord North and the Court faction, he defended his side in a serious of admirable pamphlets. The *Thoughts on the Present Discontents* belongs to 1770, the opening year of North's ministry. From the autumn of 1774 to 1780 he sat as member for Bristol, and his writings during these six years—the *Speech on American Taxation*, delivered early in 1774, etc.—are almost entirely concerned with the burning question of America, with which the interests of his constituency were so immediately connected. He lost his seat in 1780, but was elected for Malton, and represented this borough till his retirement. During the ministries of Rockingham and Portland he was Paymaster of the Forces. The culminating point of his political life was his share in drawing up the famous East India Bill, which was destined utterly to change the administration of our Eastern dependencies. and in the trial of

Political career as a Whig.

His impeachment of Warren Hastings.

Warren Hastings, which lasted from 1788 to 1795, and terminated in the acquittal of the accused. In this solemn scene, in which a great nation sat in public judgment upon one of its most responsible officials, Burke played perhaps the most prominent part. He was one of the managers of the impeachment in the name of the Commons, and his speech (1788) is one of the sublimest philippics that ancient or modern oratory can show. He had heated his imagination in contemplating the vast, gorgeous, and picturesque nations and history of the East, until his almost morbid philanthropy was transfigured by the consciousness of his proud position as the defender of ancient and oppressed peoples before the venerable bar of history and of the English nation. It is curious to observe how gradually his speeches and writings increase in vividness of colour and in intensity of passion as he advanced in life. In 1789 the outbreak of the French Revolution arrested his attention, and, from that time forward, he devoted himself to attacking a movement in which his sagacity saw nothing but unmingled evil. His first anti-revolutionary work, the *Reflections on the French Revolution*, appeared in 1790, and remains the most famous of all his pamphlets or speeches. As the great upheaval progressed, his apprehension and terror increased into a positive fanaticism. The *Letter to a Member of the National Assembly* and the *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*, show, in their differences of style and temper, that, during 1791, the year in which the fate of the French monarchy wavered in the balance, Burke gradually was gathering hope that the danger might be avoided. A year later, in 1792, after the events of August and the September massacres, this hope left him, and in his *Thoughts on French Affairs*, published in 1797, he returned to the attack with fresh bitterness. Finally, the murder of the King and the Reign of Terror transformed him from a constitutional Whig into a Tory; and the ultimate expression of the horror which tormented him during these closing years is found in the *Letters on the Regicide Peace*, published, the first two in 1796, the third in 1797, and the fourth posthumously in 1812. Meanwhile he had retired from public life in 1794. His retirement was immediately followed by the death of his son, on whom he had set his hopes. Had this son lived Burke not improbably would have accepted the title, which fell to a scarcely less illustrious politician in the next century, of Lord Beaconsfield; as it was, he merely retired on a pension. The Duke of Bedford, himself the heaviest creditor of the Civil List, very imprudently attacked Burke's pension, and drew down upon himself the irony and wrath of the *Letter to a Noble Lord* (1796), in which Burke defended himself against all aspersions. In 1797 Burke died, and was buried in the parish church of Beaconsfield, where his country estate lay.

His anti-revolutionary works (1790–1797).

"Letter to a Noble Lord" (1796).

Burke is the greatest of English orators and political writers. He had a splendid appreciation of the virtues of style, which is evident in his sonorous and artfully constructed periods. As a master of English prose he was the equal of Gibbon, writing with the same command of sound, but with a deeper sympathy, and with an imagination which, at the height of pity or terror, is almost lyric. In fact, without Goldsmith's ease of style, this second great Irishman had the same gift of passion and illustrative fancy. In Parliament, although his speeches were brilliant with metaphor and simile, and were perhaps unequalled for an almost supernatural acuteness of political foresight and for the most profound analysis of constitutional principles, he was often less popular than many inferior debaters. The Commons have been more intellectual than they were then, and they found that Burke spoke over their heads. In society he was very popular, and was an original member and one of the most constant and brilliant ornaments of the Club over which Johnson reigned. His powers of conversation were most extraordinary. His immense knowledge and the splendour of his illustrations made him the most illustrious of talkers; and Johnson, jealous as he was of his own social supremacy, confessed that in Burke he encountered an antagonist fully his equal.

Burke's style.

His connection with Johnson.

§ 15. The last half of the eighteenth century was an epoch of political crisis. The dispute between Great Britain and her American colonies, the ominous lowering of the great revolutionary tempest in France, the prevalence of internal dissension and the consequent menace to the constitution, charged the atmosphere with gloom and thunder. From the end of 1768, and, with occasional interruptions, down to 1772, there appeared in Woodfall's *Public Advertiser*, one of the leading journals of the day, a series of letters signed with the *nom de plume* of Junius, which created a tremendous sensation. To modern criticism they seem masterpieces of personal invective and journalistic ability rather than first-rate productions of style; but their author had a ferocious aptitude for finding out weak points in the political machinery and taxing the chief offenders with their guilt in a singularly offensive manner of indictment. The smooth periods of Junius were smeared all over with an obvious venom. He combined a certain dignity of style and command of under-statement with a spiteful fury and an incredible zest for calumny. His real name has never been altogether certain, and he may be said to have his niche in company with other well preserved and much disputed anonymities like the executioner of Charles I or the Man in the Iron Mask. Burke, Hamilton, Lyttelton, and Lord George Sackville have all been held responsible for these remarkable productions, which, it must be owned, are not altogether to their credit. Nor is this confusion of names by

The "Letters of Junius" (1769–1772).

any means to Burke's glory. The real author was, in all probability, and on the best testimony, Sir Philip Francis, who held the first clerkship in the War Office; this was the theory unconditionally supported by Macaulay, whose knowledge of the period was extraordinary. The author was well acquainted, at all events, with the disputes and intrigues in the subordinate department of the War Office, and went out of his way to expose them with the animosity of a man suffering from a personal grievance. His personal attacks were chiefly directed against the Dukes of Grafton and Bedford; but the opponent against whom his sharpest satire was levelled was Sir William Draper. In great public questions he bitterly complained of the infringement of constitutional liberty in the expulsion of Wilkes from the House of Commons and the seizure of his papers. Government made the most violent but fruitless efforts to discover the writer, and Woodfall, the publisher, was submitted to severe punishment, although there is every reason to believe that he too was kept in perfect ignorance of his correspondent's real name. The whole annals of political controversy show nothing so bitter and terrible as the personalities and invectives of Junius, which are rendered more formidable by the writer's apparently disinterested tone, and by his scandalised espousal of moderate principles.

Their probable author: SIR PHILIP FRANCIS (1740–1818).

§ 16. Among the philosophers and publicists of this period not the least eminent is ADAM SMITH, the founder, in Great Britain, of the science of Political Economy. Like his friend and senior, Hume, he was a Scotsman, and had the true Scottish genius for metaphysics. He was a native of the "lang toun" of Kirkcaldy, and, after three years of study at Glasgow under Francis Hutcheson, a teacher whose influence upon his thought was permanent, went up to Oxford as Snell exhibitioner of Balliol, and stayed there for six years. He returned to Scotland in 1746, and, during 1748–9, lived in Edinburgh, giving lectures on rhetoric and criticism. The success of his conferences brought him, in 1751, the chair of Logic at Glasgow, and, in 1752, the chair of Moral Philosophy, which had been held some years before by his master Hutcheson. A course of lectures delivered in the University was published in 1759 as the *Theory of Moral Sentiments*; and this, written in a clear and polished style, and adapting itself to the fashionable philosophy of the day, had a great vogue, and has actually more literary value than his later and more solid work. In 1763 he accepted the post of tutor to the young Duke of Buccleuch, resigned his professorship, and, travelling upon the Continent with his charge, found leisure to proceed with his great book, which had originated in another course of Glasgow lectures. He came back to England in 1766, his mind much widened by contact with the foreign economists, the chief of whom, Turgot, was

ADAM SMITH (1723–1790).

four years younger than himself. The *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776) did not appear for ten years, but doubtless profited by the delay. Smith was rewarded for his services by a commissionership in the Scottish Custom-House, which he held from 1777 till his death in 1790.

The *Wealth of Nations* is not a great work of style. Smith wrote in a homely and colloquial manner, making his points in forcible and never elegant phrases. But this book was the first systematic treatise produced in England on a most important subject, and, although not free from erroneous deductions, was the most valuable contribution ever made to a science, then almost in its infancy, but destined in the future to exercise an immense and beneficial influence on legislation and commerce. Its success is due, in a great measure, to Smith's clear logic and his abundance of popular illustration. His fundamental principles are briefly these: that gold and silver are by no means wealth either to individuals or communities, being only symbols and conventional representations of value; that labour is the true source of riches; and that any state interference with the distribution or production of commodities can only aggravate the evils it is intended to cure. He was the first to show, by apt and picturesque illustration, the wonderful results of the division of labour, both as regards the quantity and quality of the product. His moral and metaphysical theories have perished with the temporary phase of thought that gave them birth, but his *Wealth of Nations* will always remain the foundation and starting-point of the science of which its author was the pioneer.

The "Wealth of Nations" (1776): its economic importance.

§ 17. The Adam Smith of the law is SIR WILLIAM BLACKSTONE, who produced one of the most exhaustive and systematic of legal text-books. Like Johnson, he was a nursling of Pembroke College, Oxford, and spent a great part of his life as a don. In his youth he had a strong inclination for poetry; but, in 1741, he entered the Middle Temple and was called to the bar in 1746. While a member of the genial society of All Souls, where he introduced the custom of laying down wine for consumption in the college instead of drinking any haphazard vintage at the nearest inn, he became the first Vinerian Professor of Law; and his professorial lectures were the nucleus of his *Commentaries on the Laws of England*. The first volume of these was published in 1765, when he was Principal of New Inn Hall. In 1766 he resigned his University appointments, and left Oxford for London. The publication of the *Commentaries* ceased in 1769, Blackstone himself dying eleven years later. He sat in Parliament as member for the Wiltshire boroughs of Hindon and Westbury; and in 1770 he was appointed a Justice of the Common Pleas. His colossal work

SIR WILLIAM BLACKSTONE (1723–1780).

His "Commentaries."

was the first instance of a systematic manual which combined and popularised all the elementary and historical knowledge requisite for the study; and this book, which has the merit of being exceedingly interesting, still retains its importance as a scientific epitome of English law. Numerous editions have been published, bringing up the work to the existing state of legal knowledge, and showing such modifications as have been made from time to time in our legislation. The great questions of right and property which lie at the root of all social organisations are lucidly treated, and the mingled web of Teutonic, Feudal, Parliamentary, and Ecclesiastical legislation is carefully unravelled and distinctly disposed.

§ 18. In the theological philosophy of the eighteenth century the greatest name is that of JOSEPH BUTLER, the son of a linen-draper at Wantage. His father, a Presbyterian, sent him to a school at Tewkesbury, which was also a seminary for dissenting ministers. While he was here, engaged in finishing his studies, he wrote his letters to Dr. Samuel Clarke—a precocious exhibition of metaphysical talent. In 1714 he abandoned the idea of the Presbyterian ministry, joined the Church of England, and went to Oriel College, Oxford, where he seems to have found the teaching unprofitable. He formed, however, a fortunate friendship with Edward Talbot, son of the Bishop of Salisbury, which led to future preferment. He took Holy Orders in 1718; in 1719, chiefly on the recommendation of Dr. Clarke, he was appointed Preacher at the Rolls Chapel; and in 1721 he received a prebendal stall at Salisbury. In 1721, when his friend Talbot's father was translated from Salisbury to Durham, he also became rector of Haughton-le-Skerne, and, in 1725, was presented to the "golden rectory" of Stanhope, in the moorland country at the head of the Wear. Here he stayed for eight years, publishing, in 1726, his *Sermons Preached at the Rolls Chapel*. In 1733 he was called to London to be chaplain to Lord Chancellor Talbot, his friend's eldest brother. In 1736 he was appointed a clerk of the closet to Queen Caroline and a prebendary of Rochester. *The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature* (1736) led, in 1738, to the bishopric of Bristol, with which, after 1740, he held the deanery of St. Paul's. On the death of Archbishop Potter in 1747 he refused the offer of the see of Canterbury, but accepted the mitre of Durham in 1750. He lived for only two years longer; he died at Bath in 1752, and is buried in Bristol Cathedral. The great monument of this excellent, if somewhat frigid, prelate's life is, of course, *The Analogy of Religion*, in which he examines the resemblance between the nature and attributes of God, as proved by arguments drawn from the works of nature, and shows that natural religion is in no way incompatible with the notions conveyed to us by revela-

JOSEPH BUTLER (1692–1752).

Butler's "Analogy" (1736).

tion. Butler's reasoning has filled the greatest minds with admiration, and the study of his work has contributed to form some of the most accomplished dialecticians; but the closeness and coherence of his logic, which compels an unusual degree of attention and a rare faculty of following his analysis, places the *Analogy* out of the reach of ordinary readers. Added to this, his style, never very light-footed or careful of construction, induces a further difficulty. His moral theory is founded mainly upon the existence in every mind of a guiding and testing principle of conscience, furnishing an infallible and supreme criterion of the goodness or wickedness of our actions.

Six years younger than Butler was WILLIAM WARBURTON, whose life extended over three-quarters of the eighteenth century. He was a Nottinghamshire man, born at Newark, educated at Newark and Oakham, and destined for the law. His own inclination led him to take Holy Orders, and he was for many years rector of Brant Broughton, near his native place. He pushed himself into the most prominent controversial place of his day with an immense amount of truculent energy. *The Alliance between Church and State* (1736) was his first book, and was succeeded by the famous *Divine Legation of Moses Demonstrated*, which was published in two divisions, the first in 1738, the second in 1741. This vast work, full of digressions into all kinds of subjects, was intended as an answer to the deistical contention that the Mosaic dispensation included no belief in a future life; but the argument on which Warburton founded his structure was more ingenious than convincing, and the whole book was too long. Of the style, the best that can be said is that it is strong and sometimes pointed. Warburton had an acute wit and could not fail to use it to advantage, but there is no denying that he wrote heavily and had as ponderous a vocabulary as any writer of his century. He was eminently a disputant, a quarrelsome champion of his own opinions. When he rested from his controversies with the deists it was only to attack some other obnoxious philosopher or fellow-clergyman. The rest of his works form a voluminous catalogue, and to-day little but the *Divine Legation* is remembered of his writing. This was the cause of his preferment, which culminated, in 1759, in his translation from the deanery of Bristol to the see of Gloucester. His importance in the literary life of his day, although he bellowed like a bull for pre-eminence and deafened many of his contemporaries into acquiescence, is now limited to his friendship with Pope. He had defended the theological soundness of the *Essay on Man* in 1738 and 1739, in answer to the attack of a Swiss pastor named Crousaz; in consequence, Pope became his friend, and made him his literary executor. In 1747, while preacher at Lincoln's Inn, Warburton took upon himself the task, for

WILLIAM WARBURTON (1698–1779).

His "Divine Legation of Moses" (1738–41).

His intimacy with Pope.

which he had no qualification, of revising Pope's edition of Shakespeare, and left confusion worse confounded. He married, in 1745, Miss Gertrude Tucker, a niece of the famous Ralph Allen of Prior Park.

In the second half of the century the most distinguished theologian was WILLIAM PALEY, who may be described as a more popular Butler. He was born at Peterborough, educated at Giggleswick, where his father was head master from 1745 to 1799, and, after wasting the first part of his time at Cambridge, turned over a new leaf, became senior wrangler in 1763, and fellow of Christ's in 1766. Later on Edmund Law, Bishop of Carlisle, the father of his closest friend, gave him preferment in his diocese. It was as archdeacon of Carlisle, between 1782 and 1795, that he published the *Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy* (1785), the *Horæ Paulinæ* (1790), and the *View of the Evidences of Christianity* (1794). The last ten years of his life were spent as rector of Bishop-Wearmouth, where, in 1802, he published the *Treatise on Natural Theology*. He also held the sub-deanery of Lincoln during the same period. His works cover an immense field of learning; but, on the whole, it may be said that Paley adapted the works of previous writers for popular use, and that his only claim to originality is the *Horæ Paulinæ*, in which he stated the case for the genuineness of St. Paul's Epistles by establishing undesigned coincidences between them and the *Acts of the Apostles*. In the *Moral Philosophy* he investigated the principles of human action in the individual and community, and in the *Evidences of Christianity*, so familiar to the Cambridge undergraduate, he gave a rather late answer to Hume's attack on miracles—Hume had died eighteen years before—defending the Resurrection and the Christian miracles very clearly and ingeniously. For the *Natural Theology*, in which he applied the facts of natural phenomena to the proof of God's existence, omnipotence, and benevolence, he studied anatomy and physiology, and, in the result, which was the fruit of a painful old age, showed himself an expert man of science. As a Christian apologist Paley deserves all his subsequent reputation. In style, he is a lucid writer of very correct English, free from heaviness, but suffering somewhat from its passionless uniformity.

WILLIAM PALEY (1743–1805).

§ 19. GILBERT WHITE'S *Natural History of Selborne* stands apart from the philosophy and controversy of the Johnsonian age. This Izaak Walton of the eighteenth century was born, lived, and died at the Hampshire village of Selborne. He went to school under the elder Thomas Warton at Basingstoke; he was a fellow of Oriel from 1744 to his death; he took Holy Orders and held a sinecure living in Northamptonshire; and there is a legend that he fell in love with the future Mrs. Chapone, but was refused. Otherwise he lived quietly in his native village,

GILBERT WHITE (1720–1793).

observing its birds and flowers with a wonderful affection, and scandalising his contemporaries by the easy way in which he kept his fellowship and his living in addition to his ample patrimony. The *Natural History of Selborne* (1789) consists of a series of letters to his friends, Thomas Pennant and the Hon. Daines Barrington, in which he has registered all his observations of animal and vegetable life, of scenery and the weather, and a thousand details invisible to previous naturalists. His interest and enthusiasm in his pursuits captivate the dullest reader, and the charming book has made many naturalists. White's gentle and playful humour; his pleasant touches of credulity, as, for example, his obstinate desire to find proofs that swallows hibernate under water; the association of his intense personality with the beautiful scenes he loved so well—every feature of his character, in short, heightens the charm and fascination of his book. He originated a new departure in literature. The grave natural philosophy of Ray and Willoughby gave place to a no less scientific and more practical method of study.

"Natural History of Selborne" (1789).

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

A.—THEOLOGIANS.

From what has been said already of the theology of this period, it will be clear that the devotional and practical spirit had passed, with William Law, out of English religious literature. The constant arguments which perplexed the not otherwise pious eighteenth century turned its theologians into metaphysicians and controversialists. Mysticism died out, and was succeeded by a matter-of-fact, eminently prosaic treatment of religion. When the philosophers turned to writing commentaries, they took their stand on the ground of common-sense and utility; they wrote and preached heavily and with no lack of polysyllables, but with no attempt at ecstatic periods or lyric perorations. During the whole of the eighteenth century theological style had undergone a careful pruning, and every ten years left it barer than it was before. Butler is an unique exception; but his crowded manner is no model. Paley, who wrote more elegantly, is, at the same time, the most colourless of all writers; in his simple, unadorned sentences we are as far removed as possible from the brilliant rhetoric of Taylor and the great divines. At the end of the century the spirit of mysticism revived with the Evangelical movement and prepared the way for the growth of a new theology on the old lines. In the meantime the theology of the period with which we are dealing is rather dull; its general latitudinarianism, its argumentative handling of mysteries, its obvious lack of sprituality, and its monotonous slavery to correctness of diction, give it a superficial formality which is always lifeless; while its tendency to deal with religion on the side of current controversy renders its value, in many cases, ephemeral. Butler is an Anglican Father; Horsley had a great reputation in his own time; but the rest cannot command our enthusiasm on any other ground than their devotion to a precise logic.

HUGH BLAIR (1718-1800) was a Presbyterian minister in Edinburgh, whose vapid and rhetorical sermons

(1777) had a great vogue, and have even now a certain reputation. They were an excellent speculation for Blair himself, who published four volumes of them before his death. "Though the dog is a Scotchman," said Johnson, "and a Presbyterian, and everything he should not be, I was the first to praise them." "Yet," he said on another occasion, "perhaps they may not be reprinted after seven years, at least not after Blair's death." A fifth volume, however, appeared posthumously in 1801.

GEORGE CAMPBELL (1719–1796), Professor of Divinity at Aberdeen and Principal of Marischal College, was one of the most celebrated moderate clergy of the Established Church in Scotland. His *Dissertation on Miracles* (1762) was the most successful of contemporary answers to Hume, and his *Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1776) is one of the most able works on the subject. He also wrote *A Translation of the Gospels* (1789) and *Lectures on Ecclesiastical History* (1800). Few men have shown greater skill in polemical writing combined with gentleness and regard for their opponent.

PHILIP DODDRIDGE (1702–1751) was a Nonconformist divine of some celebrity, who spent the most important part of his life as a minister at Northampton, and, going abroad for his health, died at Lisbon, three years before a very different person, Henry Fielding. His writings were practical and expository, and show that his mind was pervaded by his religion. The chief are: *Discourses on Regeneration* (1741), *The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul* (1745), and the once popular *Family Expositor* (1739–56), which are all written plainly and forcibly. The fame, however, of his epigram, "Live while you live," is more lasting than the reputation of these solid works.

GEORGE HORNE (1730–1792), President of Magdalen College, Oxford, and Bishop of Norwich in 1790, published the well-known *Commentary on the Psalms* (1771). Boswell tells us that he had thoughts of editing Walton's *Lives*, but relinquished the idea on hearing that it had been undertaken by Lord Hailes.

SAMUEL HORSLEY (1733–1806), the son of a lecturer at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, was a striking personality among the bishops of his day—a man, as his sermons testify, of fervent piety, a clever controversialist, a great orator in the House of Lords, and otherwise an accomplished prelate. He was educated at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, and became a fellow of the Royal Society in 1767. His preferment in the Church was very rapid—a prebend at St. Paul's in 1777, the archdeaconry of St. Albans in 1781, a stall at Gloucester in 1787, the bishopric of St. Davids in 1788. He was translated to Rochester in 1793, holding with his see the deanery of Westminster, and, in 1802, he was translated back to Wales as Bishop of St. Asaph. He resigned his fellowship of the Royal Society, of which he had been secretary, in 1784, owing to the dispute between the members and Sir Joseph Banks. In addition to his numerous sermons and charges, he wrote translations of the Psalms (1815), edited Sir Isaac Newton's works (1779–85), and routed Priestley in controversy. Canon Overton says that, "as a master of English prose, Samuel Horsley had few equals in his own day." This is not, perhaps, very high praise; but any reader will see that in his style there are certain modern elements, a colour and a humour, which mark him off from his contemporaries.

RICHARD HURD (1720–1808), Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry in 1774, and of Worcester in 1781, was the friend and *protégé* of Warburton, and attempted to carry on his master's rhetorical manner. His chief works are the *Life of Warburton* (1788) and *An Introduction to the Study of the Prophecies* (1772). He was offered the primacy in 1783, on the death of Archbishop Cornwallis.

JOHN JORTIN (1698–1770), prebendary of St. Paul's and archdeacon of London, was one of the clergy who crossed a lance more than once with Warburton. His

Ecclesiastical History (1751-1754) and *Life of Erasmus* (1758), without tempting the reader to enthusiasm, are scholarly and well-written works.

ROBERT LOWTH (1710 – 1787), Bishop of St. Davids in 1766, translated to Oxford in the same year, and to London in 1777, refused the primacy on the same occasion as Bishop Hurd. His chief works were his *Translation of Isaiah* (1778) and his Latin *Prælections on Hebrew Poetry* (1753). These were professorial lectures at Oxford—he was a fellow of New College—and have had a great influence on modern biblical criticism.

RICHARD WATSON (1737–1816), Bishop of Llandaff, wrote answers to Gibbon (1776) and Tom Paine (1796). These, the *Apologies* for Christianity and the Bible, are well known.

Of other writers, who have added little to English literature, and yet have been of great service in shaping the moral and religious thought of the country, we may mention the brothers EBENEZER and RALPH ERSKINE (1680–1754 and 1685–1752); the great JOHN WESLEY (1703–1791), of Christ Church, Oxford, fellow of Lincoln, and founder of the Wesleyan Methodists; and JAMES HERVEY (1714–1758), author of *Meditations among the Tombs* (1746), *Theron and Aspasio* (1755), etc.

B.—PHILOSOPHERS.

(1) Scotland takes the philosophical honours of this age. Apart from Hume and Adam Smith, her two greatest gifts to the period, she produced a tribe of metaphysicians between 1750 and 1800. The chief influences, however, which led these men to think for themselves, were English. On the one hand, they had a veneration for the incomplete deist, Shaftesbury; on the other, the works of the Arian Churchman, Samuel Clarke, left a deep impression on them. Later on, the influence of Butler at once modified their tendencies and extended their range of thought.

FRANCIS HUTCHESON (1694-1746), an Ulsterman, may be definitely considered as the founder of the Scottish metaphysical school. He studied at Glasgow, became Professor of Moral Philosophy there in 1729, and was Adam Smith's master. His *Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, published in 1725–6, while he was a schoolmaster in Dublin, is directly the result of the study of Shaftesbury. His chief work, *A System of Moral Philosophy* (1755), appeared posthumously, under his son's editorship.

HENRY HOME, LORD KAMES (1696–1782), an Edinburgh law-lord, enjoyed an immense popularity as a mental philosopher. His chief book, the *Elements of Criticism* (1762), was eulogised by Johnson, not as an original piece of work, but as telling "old things in a new way." Of his other works, the *Introduction to the Art of Thinking* (1761) and the anecdotal miscellany called *Sketches of the History of Man* (1774), were only a little less famous. Kames is to-day a dreary writer; but we can understand his reputation in an age when everybody read philosophy with the utmost greediness.

Another law-lord, JAMES BURNETT, LORD MONBODDO (1714–1799), dabbled in philosophy, and wrote an *Essay of the Origin and Progress of Language* (1773-92) and a work on *Ancient Metaphysics* (1779-99), but is now principally remembered by the innumerable anecdotes of his eccentricities. His pet theory was that mankind had at one time been adorned with tails, but, by a long course of sitting, had worn them away. Numerous references to his peculiarities will be found in Boswell, who criticises his style as "exceedingly dry and hard."

These judges were merely amateurs. One of the principal metaphysicians, and the head of a very important school, was THOMAS REID (1710–1796), Professor of Moral Philosophy, first at King's College, Aberdeen, and afterwards at Glasgow, where he succeeded Adam Smith. His *Inquiry into the Human Mind* (1764) attacked

Hume's scepticism, but vindicated a common-sense view of morality as opposed to ideal theories. In 1785 he published *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, and in 1788 *Essays on the Active Powers of Man*.

Reid's great disciple was DUGALD STEWART (1753–1828), an Edinburgh man, who attended his lectures at Glasgow, and held successively the chairs of Mathematics and Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh. His great work, *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, appeared at various times—the first volume in 1792, the second in 1814, and the third in 1827. The famous *Philosophical Essays* were published in 1810. Stewart's character was the admiration of the day, and his moral influence on the society of Edinburgh was extraordinary. His *Essays* show his elegant and polished style at its best.

THOMAS BROWN (1778–1820), a poet and philosopher distinguished for his power of analysis, was Stewart's coadjutor from 1810 to 1820 in the chair of Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh.

A third Edinburgh professor was ADAM FERGUSON (1723–1816), a native of Perthshire and a member of St. Andrews University, who wrote *A History of the Roman Republic* (1782) and *Principles of Moral and Political Science* (1792).

(2) Of the English philosophers, DAVID HARTLEY (1705–1757), a Yorkshireman and fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, has a considerable reputation as the founder of that school which explained the various states of the mind by the principle of association, and had among its later members James Mill. Hartley spent a great part of his life as a doctor, and his single work of importance is the *Observations on Man, his Frame, Duty, and Expectations* (1749), to which he devoted the most laborious attention. His work was very original, and does not deserve the oblivion into which it has fallen among general readers. A follower of Hartley's doctrines was ABRAHAM TUCKER (1705–1774), a country gentleman, who wrote, under the pseudonym of Edward Search, a book called *The Light of Nature Pursued* (1768).

RICHARD PRICE (1723–1791), a Welshman, who became a Nonconformist minister in London and taught in the Nonconformist College at Hackney, endeavoured, in his *Review of the Principal Questions in Morals* (1757), to interpret the ideas of Cudworth, who had traced moral obligation to the perceptions of the understanding. He wrote several able works on financial subjects—*Observations on Reversionary Payments* (1770) and an *Appeal to the Public on the subject of the National Debt* (1772)—and, in 1778, after his defence of the revolted Americans in his *Observations on Civil Liberty* (1776), was invited to settle in the United States and assist in regulating the finances. His *Discourse on the Love of Our Country*, delivered to the so-called Revolutionary Society in 1789, was a warm defence of the French Revolution, and called down the wrath of Burke in his *Reflections* on the great outbreak. His modern reputation almost entirely depends on the enmity which he thus excited.

JOSEPH PRIESTLEY (1733–1804) was chosen Price's successor as morning preacher at Hackney in 1793. He was a Yorkshireman, and became a Nonconformist minister in various parts of England. Originally a Calvinist, he gradually changed his opinions and became an aggressive Unitarian. While he was at Birmingham, between 1780 and 1791, the French Revolution broke out; and his sympathy with it was so strongly expressed that some rioters set fire to his house and destroyed his library and scientific apparatus. In philosophical opinions he followed Hartley in his theory of the association of ideas, but in his *Disquisitions relating to Matter and Spirit* (1777) he advocated materialism and the doctrine of necessity, *i.e.* philosophic fatalism. In consequence, he scandalised the orthodox. Johnson said that "he unsettled everything, but settled nothing"; while Horsley had the better of him in controversy. His

life was spent amid a rain of controversial pamphlets. He attacked the Scottish metaphysicians, and argued with Gibbon. His chief fame, however, springs from his discoveries in experimental physics. He was one of the fathers of chemistry, and made several discoveries in relation to light and colour. He left England for America in 1794, and died, ten years later, at Northumberland, Pennsylvania.

C.—HISTORIANS AND SCHOLARS.

THOMAS BIRCH (1705–1766), a clergyman, was the author of many laborious works on modern history. He also published a *General Dictionary, Historical and Critical* (1734–41), and edited *Thurloe's State Papers* (1759). Johnson, who knew Birch during the period in which he was writing his own *Dictionary*, said, "Tom Birch is as brisk as a bee in conversation, but no sooner does he take a pen in his hand than it becomes a torpedo to him and benumbs all his faculties."

JACOB BRYANT (1715–1804), secretary to the Duke of Marlborough, who gave him a lucrative place in the Ordnance office, was the author of several works on classical and mythological subjects. His fancy often carried him too far in paradox and speculation, but he established and defended his theories with great ingenuity and research. His leading works were: *A New System, or an Analysis of Ancient Mythology* (1774–6); *On the Plain of Troy* (1795); and *A Dissertation concerning the War of Troy* (?1796).

JEAN LOUIS DE LOLME (1740?–1807), a lawyer of Geneva, published in 1775 a work on *The Constitution of England*, written and published originally in French (1771), but translated by himself into fluent English. It was of value as an authority in its day, but has been superseded since then by more modern works.

JAMES GRANGER (1723–1776) was a clergyman who wrote a *Biographical History of England* (1769), illustrated with a splendid collection of engraved portraits. He must not be confounded with James Grainger, the West Indian doctor and poet. His book was continued by Mark Noble.

SIR DAVID DALRYMPLE, LORD HAILES (1726–1792), a Scottish Lord of Session, wrote *Annals of Scotland* from Malcolm Canmore to the accession of the house of Stewart (1776–9), edited the fifth book of Lactantius, with Latin notes, and published many other legal and historical works. His name occurs constantly in Boswell, and he was one of the few Scotsmen of whom Johnson spoke with consistent kindness.

ROBERT HENRY (1718–1790), a native of Stirlingshire, and a Presbyterian minister in Edinburgh, published a *History of England* (1771–93) which was popular in its day. It extended to the reign of Henry VIII, and treated at some length the internal affairs, manners, and customs of the people.

JOHN, LORD HERVEY (1696–1743), son and heir, by the death of his half brother, to the first Earl of Bristol, and himself called to the House of Lords in 1733 as Lord Hervey of Ickworth, wrote *Memoirs of the Reign of George II*, which were published in 1848 under the editorship of John Wilson Croker. The more scandalous passages were, however, left out; and the book, in its abridged state, forms a delightful storehouse of amusing anecdote. Hervey, who was educated at Westminster and Clare Hall, Cambridge, was concerned with all the Court intrigue of his time, principally as the supporter and confidant of George II's Queen. He married the maid of honour, Molly Lepell, so famous for her beauty. To-day he is remembered chiefly as the Sporus of Pope's *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot.*

> "His wit all see-saw, between *that* and *this*,
> Now high, now low, now master up, now miss,
> And he himself one vile antithesis."

MALCOLM LAING (1762–1818), born in Orkney, which he represented for some time in Parliament,

wrote a *History of Scotland* (1802) from the union of the crowns in 1603 to the union of the kingdoms in 1707. He completed and edited Robert Henry's history, and was an unsparing opponent of the Ossianic myth.

THOMAS LELAND (1722–1785), D.D. and fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, besides his well-known translation of Demosthenes (1754-61), published a *History of Ireland* (1773). A similar work (1763) was written by FERDINANDO WARNER (1703–1768), the author of *Ecclesiastical History to the Eighteenth Century* (1756–7).

GEORGE, first LORD LYTTELTON (1709–1773), a man of great virtue and many accomplishments, and Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1755, was the author of a *History of Henry II* (1767–71), but is perhaps best known by his *Observations on the Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul* (1747). His poetry, belonging to the school of James Thomson, is of very slight merit, with the exception of one or two pieces, but gained him a place in Johnson's *Lives*.

CATHARINE MACAULAY (1733–1791), called by Walpole "the henbrood of faction," was the wife of a physician, and devoted her life to the service of Republicanism. Her chief work was the celebrated *History of England* during the Stewart dynasty (1763–83), which provoked considerable attention at the time, owing to its vigorous and popular style. She crossed the Atlantic and visited George Washington. She even ventured to measure her strength with Burke, and attacked (1790) his *Reflections on the French Revolution*.

WILLIAM OLDYS (1696–1761), Norroy King-at-Arms, was a busy historian and antiquarian. In 1736 he wrote the *Life of Sir Walter Ralegh* as a preface to a new edition of Ralegh's *History of the World*; he edited the *Harleian Miscellany* between 1744 and 1746, and wrote several articles for the *Biographia Britannica* (1747–60). He was at one time very poor, and was imprisoned in the Fleet.

JOHN PINKERTON (1758–1826), born in Edinburgh, was a laborious and learned writer, and the author of numerous works, among which may be mentioned a collection of *Ancient Scottish Poems* (1786), a *History of Modern Scotland* (1797), *Modern Geography* (1802), *Voyages and Travels* (1807–14), etc.

RICHARD PORSON (1759–1808), fellow of Trinity College and Regius Professor of Greek at Cambridge, was born in Norfolk of humble parents, but became one of the greatest Greek scholars in the country. Besides his well-known contributions to classical literature, Porson wrote English *Letters to Archdeacon Travis* (1788–9) on the disputed verse, 1 St. John v. 7, on account of which he deserves a place among English writers.

WILLIAM RUSSELL (1741–1793), a native of Selkirkshire, is known as the author of Russell's *Modern Europe* (1779-84), which long kept the field as a general text-book of modern history.

GILBERT STUART (1742–1786) of Edinburgh wrote a *History of the Establishment of the Reformation in Scotland* (1780) and a *History of Scotland* (1782) in which he vehemently attacked Robertson. He was an active writer in the Scottish reviews, and engaged in bitter controversy with many of his contemporaries.

WILLIAM TYTLER (1711–1792), the father and grandfather of historians, wrote himself an *Inquiry into the Evidence against Mary Queen of Scots* (1759), which had a great vogue at the time, and was intended as a criticism of Robertson and Hume's treatment of the subject.

GILBERT WAKEFIELD (1756–1801) was a well-known writer on divinity and a classical scholar, whose Unitarian convictions led him to leave the Church of England. He published a translation of certain books of the New Testament, and answered Tom Paine in a work on the Evidences of Christianity (1793). In replying to Bishop Watson of Llandaff on behalf of the French Revolution (1798), he was found guilty of libel and sentenced to imprisonment for two years. He was a hasty

but honest man, "as violent against Greek accents," said Porson, "as he was against the Trinity, and anathematised the final *ν* as strongly as episcopacy."

ROBERT WATSON (1730?–1781), Professor of Logic at St. Andrews, continued Robertson's *Charles V* in an unprofitable *History of Philip II* (1777).

JOHN WHITAKER (1735–1808) wrote a *History of Manchester* (1771–5) and a book called *Mary, Queen of Scots, Vindicated* (1787) which deserve a passing mention.

The Universal History, in 23 volumes, was completed in 1760, under the care of Swinton, Archibald Bower, George Psalmanazar, and others. Goldsmith wrote a preface for it, and received three guineas for the task.

D.—MISCELLANEOUS WRITERS AND CRITICS.

THOMAS AMORY (1691?–1788), an Irishman by descent, resided in Westminster, was a staunch Unitarian, and lived to the great age of ninety-seven. His *Memoirs, containing the Lives of several Ladies of Great Britain*, appeared in 1755. In *The Life of John Buncle, Esq.* (1756–66), he approaches the domain of the novel. The book is an erratic narrative written in the first person, full of humour, quotation, and meditative digression, and reminding the reader, in its oddness, of Burton's *Anatomy*.

SIR WILLIAM JONES (1746–1794), a celebrated Oriental scholar, and the author of many works in various branches of literature, was the son of an eminent mathematician. He was educated at Harrow and University College, Oxford, was called to the bar in 1774, and, in 1783, was appointed a judge of the Supreme Court at Calcutta, where he died in 1794. He was one of the first Europeans who studied Sanskrit, and contributed many valuable papers to the *Researches* of the Bengal Asiatic Society. While in India he translated from the Sanskrit, *Sakúntala*, a dramatic poem by Kalidása, and the *Hitopadesa*, a collection of fables. He has obtained a place among English poets on account of a few original pieces and several translations from the Eastern writers, published at Calcutta in 1800.

JOHN LANGHORNE (1735–1779) was born in Westmorland, and held the living of Blagdon in Somerset. He was a preacher of some popularity, and wrote tales and poems. In company with his brother, WILLIAM LANGHORNE (1721–1772), he published a translation of Plutarch's *Lives* (1770), which superseded North's magnificent version in the correct taste of the eighteenth century, and, until quite recently, was the standard English edition of the great work.

CHARLOTTE LENNOX (1720–1804) wrote two popular novels, *Harriot Stuart* (1750) and *The Female Quixote* (1752).

FRANCES SHERIDAN (1724–1766), *née* Chamberlaine, mother of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, wrote two very tearful novels in the sentimental manner, *Memoirs of Miss Sidney Bidulph* (1761) and *Nourjahad* (1788), the first of which was greatly admired by Johnson. Her two comedies, *The Discovery* (1763) and *The Dupe* (1764), are not as able as her novels.

JOHN HORNE TOOKE (1736–1812) was the son of a London poulterer named Horne. He received his education at Westminster, Eton, and St. John's College, Cambridge, after which, taking Holy Orders, he threw himself into the great political struggles of those days, and wrote in 1765 in favour of Wilkes. In 1773 he resigned his preferment in the Church in order to study for the bar; but the benchers refused to call him because he was a clergyman. Mr. Tooke of Purley, whose name he afterwards adopted, left him his fortune. In 1796 he was a candidate for Parliament as member for Westminster, and in 1801 was elected for Old Sarum. Previously, in 1794, he had been tried for high treason, when he was defended by Erskine. The declining years of his life were passed at his literary retreat at Wimbledon, where his friends often came to enjoy the hospitality,

humour, and philosophy of the hale and witty old man. Between 1786 and 1805 he enlarged his *Letter to Mr. Dunning on the English Particle* into the "ΕΠΕΑ ΠΤΕΡΟΕΝΤΑ, *or the Diversions of Purley*, a series of dialogues upon language, in which he reduced all parts of speech to nouns and verbs. The book should be carefully consulted by every student of the English language; but many of its etymologies are fanciful and far-fetched.

The chief Shakespearean critics of this period were: (1) RICHARD FARMER (1735–1797), Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, who published in 1767 an *Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare*, discussing with great skill the dramatist's historical and classical authorities.

(2) GEORGE STEEVENS (1736–1800), who was Johnson's partner in the *Shakespeare* of 1773, and became a member of the Club in 1774. He afterwards remodelled the text and, with Reed's help, brought out a new edition—actually the fourth—in 1793, in which he introduced serious textual alterations. He was by no means an universal favourite. Topham Beauclerk called him "malignant," and said that he deserved to be kicked.

(3) ISAAC REED (1742–1807) of Staple Inn, who edited the third edition of Johnson and Steevens' *Shakespeare* (1785), and brought out a new revised version in 1803, known as the "first variorum." The "second variorum" is the revision of this in 1813.

(4) EDMUND MALONE (1741–1812), who had contributed notes to Steevens' second edition of the work (1778) and had published a critical and historical supplement, containing the poems, Broke's *Romeus and Juliet*, and other things, in 1780, subsequently fell foul of Steevens, and brought out a *Shakespeare* of his own in 1790. After Boswell's death he edited four editions of the *Life of Johnson*, between 1797 and 1812, and his further notes on Shakespeare were incorporated by the younger Boswell in the "third variorum" Shakespeare, usually known as "Boswell's Malone" (1821). Malone had not Steevens' ability; but he was a more cautious editor, and paid more respect to the text of the first folio.

Among the numerous travellers of this age should be mentioned SIR GEORGE LEONARD STAUNTON (1737–1801) and GEORGE, EARL MACARTNEY (1737–1806), who narrated their mission to China in two interesting works, Staunton's *Account of the Embassy* (1797) and Macartney's *Journal* (1807).

The two greatest names, however, are those of JAMES BRUCE (1730–1794), who penetrated far into Abyssinia and Central Africa in search of the source of the Nile, and

MUNGO PARK (1771–1806), whose literary achievements are far greater than those of Bruce. His famous Travels appeared in 1799. He was drowned while escaping from a native attack, but his journal was preserved, and published posthumously in 1815.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE DAWN OF ROMANTIC POETRY.

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§ 1. LITERARY fashions are seldom of long duration. The classical taste in English poetry had no sooner reached its zenith in Pope than it began to disappear before the rise of a new fashion. English poetry, in the stilted graces of the heroic couplet, had been brought to so mechanical a perfection that every versifier was capable of writing his copy of neat machine-made lines full of regular melody and of all those artificial tricks which, by constant repetition, communicated themselves to his ear. He wrote fluently of gods and nymphs, and gave his heroes and heroines names which more or less distantly recalled the classics; he dealt in a continual supply of ingenious phrases, epigrams, and antitheses; he lived, as it were, in an elaborate garden, whose arrangements bore the least imaginable resemblance to nature. His imagination led him to nothing more natural than a grotto or a fountain. When he talked of forests, he meant trim shrubberies; when he referred to caves and deserts, he was thinking of summer-houses and rockeries. And, although it was only by degrees that the English mind freed itself from this constrained attitude, a movement in the direction of natural feeling becomes perceptible in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, and grows in strength—albeit with rather dull and tentative efforts—through its remaining half. This movement is, in a certain sense, a reaction. The artificial spirit in English poetry was, as we have seen, a direct result of

The return to nature in English poetry.

the Restoration and the fashions which it brought from France. Waller, Cowley, Dryden, and Pope, the great hierophants of this cult, take us, each of them, farther from the romantic age of Elizabethan poetry, and establish a canon of verse which removes itself very far from the standard of Shakespeare. On the other hand, these poets cannot be said to reject the claims of nature; their attitude is simply one of blindness to anything save the artificial surroundings they have created for themselves. And, when younger poets began to show their desire to see something for themselves, and to escape from the monotony of the well-ordered garden which had been so assiduously cultivated for more than sixty years, the older men were the first to praise them.

Attitude of the classical school to nature.

The promise of the romantic movement, the return to the poetry of nature, thus sprang, in the ordinary course of evolution, from the classical school of the age of Anne; it inherited many of the traditions of the Augustan age—an inevitable tendency to stiffness, a choice of conventional words, epithets, and metaphors which speaks of the influence of Pope. At the same time, the new school of poets, with Thomson at their head, are, so to speak, sons of Pope who have been strongly affected by the earlier poets. Young, for example, whose *Night Thoughts* (1741–2) we have already mentioned, addresses Milton—

Influence of the older poets on the early poets of nature.

> "Ah, could I reach your strain
> Or his, who made Mæonides our own

—thus bracketing Pope with Milton. The choice of blank verse as the metre, both of Young's *Night Thoughts* and of Thomson's *Seasons*, shows their obligation to Milton, whose splendid fire they might imitate, but never catch. Gradually the influence of Shakespeare and the old dramatists made itself more and more felt, and grew in force until the earlier writers became the source of the living element in English literature, and the poetry of the Restoration and Revolution—the direct result, it should not be forgotten, of disturbed political conditions—was regarded as an interesting parenthesis in literary history. The growth of interest in the older poetry is manifest in the unflagging zeal with which the worthies of the eighteenth century—some of them, like Warburton, most unlikely persons—edited and re-edited Shakespeare, and even more clearly in the epoch-making publication of Percy's *Reliques* (1765).

Another thing to be noticed is the part which Scotland took in this great revival. Of Sir Walter Scott we need not speak at present; he belongs to a later generation, and his work is the full flower of romance. But Thomson, who did more than anyone else for the early poetry of nature, was a Scotsman and a native of that Border

The part of Scotland in the new poetry.

where the English spirit had, centuries before, encountered the Celtic love of nature, and had been blended with it in a subtle and indissoluble union. The lyric poetry of the Lowlands, although its volume had in some measure ceased, had never died out; and, even in Allan Ramsay, indebted as his pastoral poetry was to the artificial school, the love of nature and of the bygone singers who had cherished it was far more conspicuous than any other external influence. Until the day of Burns and Scott, when the native poetry and prose of Scotland became a vital force in English literature, there was never wanting a series of Scottish bards who, poor and ephemeral though much of their verse was, carried on the romantic tradition and helped to keep it alive in England through the poetical deadness of the Johnsonian age. Blair and Beattie, by no means first-rate poets, were admired in England. Beattie's *Hermit* brought tears into the eyes of Johnson, whose rabid aversion to Scotland was not the least of his eccentricities. The same great critic, who gave rather grudging praise to Thomson, and showed an overwhelming contempt for that wild outbreak of Celtic romanticism, Macpherson's *Ossian*, confessed, in 1783, the hold that Scottish literature had gained on his country. "You know, sir, that no Scotchman publishes a book or has a play brought on the stage, but there are five hundred people ready to applaud him."

The early naturalists: 1. JAMES THOMSON (1700–1748).

§ 2. JAMES THOMSON is the greatest poet among Pope's immediate successors. He was the son of a gentleman at Ednam in Roxburghshire, and was educated at Edinburgh University, where, at an early age, he was "smit with the love of sacred song." Like his fellow-countryman, Smollett, he determined to seek his fortune in London, and, going up in 1725, lived for some time in great poverty. Another of his countrymen, David Mallet, the deist, a young man who had already shown sufficient originality to write the romantic ballad of *William and Margaret* (1723), was at this time his chief friend, and encouraged him to publish his poem on *Winter*. This, the first contribution to *The Seasons*, appeared early in 1726, and brought the young poet into favour.

Publication of "The Seasons."

He was taken up by Aaron Hill, one of those pretenders to literary fame whom Pope was very soon to lash so severely in *The Dunciad*; but Pope himself recognised the merits of the new poem, and not only gave advice to its author, but corrected and retouched several passages in it. In 1727 *Winter* was followed by *Summer*; in 1728 *Spring*, and, in 1730, *Autumn*, with a *Hymn to Nature*, completed the cycle of *The Seasons*. Thomson had been already for a short time a private tutor at East Barnet in the family of Lord Binning; he was now appointed governor to the son of the Solicitor-General (afterwards Lord Chancellor) Talbot, and travelled with his pupil in the South of France and Italy. Talbot, whose younger brother, it will be remembered, was the friend of Bishop Butler,

proved a very useful patron, and afterwards gave the poet a place in the Chancellor's gift, thus assisting him in his way to independence. On Talbot's death Thomson lost this post; but the loss was supplied, first by one, and afterwards by another sinecure, which soon placed him out of the reach of difficulty. With prosperity, however, he did not fulfil the promise of *The Seasons*. *The Castle of Indolence*, published in 1748, the year of his death, is a striking exception to the rest of his later work, but it must be regarded as a thread taken up from his earlier life and elaborated in his later years. His huge poem of *Liberty* (1734–6) was ambitious without being even interesting; and its defects were only too obvious to his declared devotees. Between 1730 and 1740 he "reeled in slippery roads of alien art," with a set of tragedies, the first of which, *Sophonisba* (1730), has gained a kind of immortality from one atrocious line, "O Sophonisba! Sophonisba, O!" —subsequently altered to "O Sophonisba! I am wholly thine." But, during these later years of his life, although still a young man, he became extraordinarily lazy and self-indulgent; there was a sensual element in his disposition which needed very little encouragement; and, having once achieved fame, he settled down to sloth. However, he was not without a certain amount of Scottish prudence, and lived in his snug cottage at Richmond with no great extravagance. He was extremely kind and generous, and showed a most amiable devotion to his relatives. His friends loved him, and he does not appear to have had a single enemy or ill-wisher. His death was premature; for, catching cold in a boating expedition on the Thames, he died of a fever when he was only forty-eight.

Later works and life.

The Seasons, which, during the happy years of his retirement, he had constantly revised and corrected until, in its intermediate and definitive forms, it became an almost entirely new poem, must always be considered the corner-stone of his fame. In plan and treatment the poem, with its four divisions, is entirely original. These four detached parts give a general and, at the same time, a minute description of all the phenomena of nature during an English year. The very uncertainty of the English seasons, with their constant and picturesque variety, aided a very difficult undertaking, which would have been almost impossible to a poet living in perpetual sunlight. Thomson watched and knew all the frowns and smiles of an English landscape; and this delicate eye for natural distinctions, this appreciation of the dramatic element in the revolution of the year, makes his poem a complete success. Round his work he cast a cloak of reverence and adoration for nature, in this anticipating Wordsworth to some extent; and it may be remarked that his ecstasy of quietism, his passive content in observing the working of natural forces, renders him, like most ardent nature-worshippers, quite impervious to humour. His blank verse, although Miltonic in

"The Seasons" (1726–1730). Thomson's style.

its origin, and rich and harmonious in itself, is, when compared with Milton's "organ-voice," pedestrian and artificial. Thomson's love of and perpetual struggle for fine language is his chief defect. When he is evidently pleasing himself best, he is most pompous; when he allows his verse to roll on simply of its own accord, he often produces effects of harmony that never leave the ear. In order to relieve the monotony of a poem entirely devoted to description, he introduces episodes here and there as incidental pictures more or less suggested by his subject. Thus, in *Winter*, he gives the famous description of the shepherd losing his way and perishing in the snow; in *Summer*, the story of Musidora, which gave Gainsborough the subject for the charming picture that now hangs on the staircase of our National Gallery; in *Autumn*, the narrative of Lavinia, borrowed, and spoiled in the borrowing, from the Scriptural history of Ruth and Boaz. Where Thomson approached the subject of love in these episodes his ill-restrained warmth of feeling broke out rather too fervently. Excellent as the whole of *The Seasons* is, it is inferior in point of literary finish to *The Castle of Indolence*. The idea and treatment of this poem are Spenserian; and the use of the Spenserian stanza corresponds admirably with Thomson's rich and luxuriant imagination. The allegory of the enchanted "Land of Drowsihead," in which the unhappy victims of Indolence find themselves hopeless captives, and their delivery from durance by the Knight, Industry, whose pedigree and training are given in exact imitation of Spenser's manner, are relieved with occasional touches of a certain kind of humour, seen in Thomson's portraits of himself and his friends. Spenser himself hardly could have surpassed the rich and dreamy loveliness, or the voluptuous melody of the description of the enchanted castle and its gardens of delight; while the passage of the Æolian harp shows that just harmony of verse and music which is native to the greatest poets. Thomson is not one of these; but, among original poets, his place is high, and he certainly set the fashion in poetry for some years to come.

"The Castle of Indolence" (1748).

§ 3. The poetry of WILLIAM SHENSTONE is now practically forgotten, but his poem of *The Schoolmistress* (1742) deserves to retain some celebrity in the history of English verse. Like Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*, it is written in the Spenserian stanza, and, with a plentiful use of archaic words, describes playfully and tenderly the dwelling, character, and pursuits of an old village dame who keeps a day-school. Shenstone's *Pastoral Ballad* (1743) is very tuneful, light, and delicate — eminently the work of a student of limited landscape and slight garden-scenes. Mr. Edmund Gosse has admirably said that it "has all the pink and silver grace of a Watteau." Shenstone's poetry is an excellent key to his general taste. He was one of the first Englishmen to cultivate the art of landscape gardening and so emancipate

2. WILLIAM SHENSTONE (1714–1763).

the English garden from the formality of precise continental methods. In this we see an outward sign of the change which he and the other new poets were bringing to pass in the character of English verse. His own gardens at Leasowes, the Leasowes, near Hagley, were in his generation as famous as his poetry. In short, Shenstone was, as Boswell said, a "very ingenious and elegant gentleman"; and, if his work languishes for want of readers, the fault lies in its scanty volume.

Modern criticism has done its duty nobly by WILLIAM COLLINS, the son of a hatter at Chichester. His poetical genius, ripened by practice and experience, would have given him almost the highest place among English lyric poets. As it was, with an ambition feverish rather than sustained, with a fatal tendency to dissipation, and with a spirit so sensitive that literary disappointment proved his ultimate ruin, he was undeniably the finest lyric poet of his age. This, considering that he had so brilliant a competitor as Gray, is no mean distinction. He was educated at Winchester College, and, going up to Oxford, entered at Queen's, but migrated, like Addison, to Magdalen. In these early years he was full of literary projects, and, while still at Oxford, published his *Persian Eclogues* (1742) and an *Epistle to Sir Thomas Hanmer* (1743), the editor of Shakespeare. The *Persian Eclogues* were, as the name implies, a set of pastorals in which the Strephons and Chloës of the conventional type were translated to the East, and their ordinary occupations and worn-out complaints were supplanted by Oriental subjects. Instead of the lamentations of the shepherd expelled from his native fields, we have the camel-driver who bewails the dangers and solitudes of his desert journey: and, instead of the aimless rustics who, since the age of Theocritus and Virgil, had discoursed suavely to each other on the merits of their respective oaten pipes, we hear the mutual commiserations of two Circassian exiles. However, there is no saying to what end this attempt to give life and colour to the pastoral might have come; we might have had Russian, American, or Algerian editions of the same theme. And, although Collins made a great effort to clothe his novel swains in appropriate costume, and to give his poems all the advantage of local colour, he was no more true to nature than those of his predecessors who had been content with the conventional Arcadia. Although the *Eclogues* are full of vivid imagery and melodious verse which promised their poet a great future, we must look for the real genius of Collins to his *Odes*, published at the end of 1746. Although their number is very small, each polished line has its own value for the student of poetry, and it is almost impossible to point to an otiose phrase or a break in the full current of melody. Collins was still trammelled by the conventions of the classical school, and the casual inspector of anthologies

William Collins 1721–1759.

Collins' "Odes" 1746.

may be tempted to pass over his odes as attempts of the old kind to patch the face of the Hellenic Muse and build up her hair in a formal top-knot. On closer acquaintance we know better. If these odes are chained to an essentially classical form of poetry, if they are full of personified abstractions, they have, at any rate, a range of melody which is a perfectly new thing, and a sense of natural beauty for which Thomson's love of nature is merely a preparation. Everyone knows *The Passions*, that famous ode which finds a place in every book of English lyrics, and represents Fear, Anger, and the rest, trying their skill upon the lyre of Music. Here Collins is as formal as any of the classical poets could be. The outward form of the poem at once recalls *Alexander's Feast*, although its tone has nothing of Dryden's rugged energy. But between the two odes there is a space of fifty-nine years, during which Dryden's lyric genius had given way to smooth and temperate effusions like Pope's *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day* and *Vital spark of heavenly flame*. The ardent lyric of the seventeenth century, when it arrived at Collins, had grown merely tepid; but in his hands it received new fire. The harmonies of *The Passions* are smooth and meditated. The ode is no cascade of impetuous sound, but, in its delicate modulations, its exact adaptation of its melody to its subject, in the hurried quatrain given to Anger, in the slow movement in which Melancholy pours "through the mellow horn her pensive soul," there is a fresh vitality, an expansion of lyric scope, something that takes us back farther than Dryden, to *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. Further, in *The Passions* Collins is thoroughly alive to the charms of landscape. The scenery of the poem is slightly meretricious; its "glades and glooms," its rocks, woods, and vales, are more like Salvator Rosa's attempts to improve on nature than anything in real life; but, where the subject is so closely allied to the vale of Tempe and other well-trodden resorts of the poets, we can hardly expect anything more. That Collins, when face to face with nature and freed from the presence of the nymphs and muses, could approach more nearly to the splendid pictorial effects of *Il Penseroso*, is seen in the *Ode to Evening*, which merely alludes in passing to the usual abstractions, and is a soft and intensely real picture of twilight and dusk. Moreover, these unrhymed stanzas are a faultless triumph of music, carrying with them a lingering echo of the sweetest melody. The *Ode to Evening* is an exceptional piece, it is true, but nowhere else can Collins' place in the evolution of romantic poetry be so thoroughly appreciated. His musical power, which here accomplishes a *tour de force* incapable of repetition, has a more normal form, which is obvious in the exquisite verses, *How sleep the brave*—a pair of stanzas full of delicate imagination. His love of allegorical personation quite conquered him in this small masterpiece; but the spirit

Their landscape quality.

Their melody.

is not that of the Hellenic woods and valleys which we have seen pervading *The Passions*. Honour becomes a pilgrim, and Freedom is represented by that hermit to whom the new romantic poets, in an age and country emphatically guiltless of hermitages, were so faithful, from Shenstone's "When forc'd from dear Hebe to go" to Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey*. In this and kindred poems the pastoral abstractions of Greek mythology give way to a dim medievalism. Something of the same kind may be seen in Collins' *Verses to the Memory of Thomson* (1748), "In yonder grave a Druid lies." Pope and the poets of his day would not have thought of Druids on such an occasion. Unfortunately, these admirable pieces failed to please the public. Collins, bitterly disappointed, destroyed the surplus copies of the *Odes* and wrote very little more. In 1749 he dedicated an *Ode on the Superstitions of the Highlands* to John Home, afterwards the author of *Douglas*; but, in dealing with this very romantic subject, with which he had no personal acquaintance, he was not altogether at his best. Nevertheless, this ode, in its latter half, is one of the finest things he ever wrote, rising from a faltering beginning to a full appreciation of the grandeur of its theme. Among his later poems this and the exquisite *Dirge to Cymbeline* (1749) remain; the *Ode on the Music of the Grecian Theatre* (1750) is lost. The decline of Collins' life was miserable enough; he became melancholy, and, in 1754, went mad. Five years later he died at Chichester, without recovering his reason.

§ 4. The work of THOMAS GRAY, to whom, as a discoverer of the picturesque, England owes so much, is, generally speaking, better known than the lyric poetry of Collins. He was the son of a money-scrivener in London, but his father was a violent and arbitrary person, and he owed everything to his mother, who endured cruel treatment from her tyrannical husband. She and her family sent him to Eton, from which he proceeded to Peterhouse at Cambridge. He did not, however, take a degree, but went down in 1738, and, from 1739 to 1741, travelled with Horace Walpole in France and Italy. He had no taste for any profession, and, in 1742, made his home at Cambridge, in spite of his dislike for the prevailing system of education. There he lived for the rest of his days the life of a cultured dilettante, going away from time to time to visit his mother and to make picturesque tours in his native country, whose beauty no man appreciated more thoroughly. In 1756 a mischievous practical joke, played on him by some undergraduates who probably construed his delicacy and refinement into superciliousness, led him to migrate from Peterhouse to Pembroke. The remaining five years of his life were more happily spent; he enjoyed great consideration from the society of his College, and, in 1768, became Regius Professor of Modern History. The historical school at Cambridge was, however, not very flourishing, and

4. THOMAS GRAY (1716–1771).

the post, so long as Gray held it, was a sinecure. He died in his rooms at Pembroke, falling ill one evening in the College hall, and dying six days later.

Gray's poetry.

Gray's poetry was very popular among his contemporaries; and, in 1757, when Cibber died, he might have been Poet Laureate. Johnson, however, utterly failed to appreciate him, and not only did he write a most unworthy life of Gray in the *Lives of the Poets*, but lost no opportunity of saying harsh things about his poems. "They are forced plants, raised in a hotbed; and they are poor plants; they are but cucumbers after all." "Sir, he was dull in company, dull in his closet, dull everywhere. He was dull in a new way, and that made many people think him great. He was a mechanical poet." This was not a malicious judgment: it was simply a vehement aberration of criticism. Gray was actually in advance of his age. Few of his contemporaries at Cambridge really understood the solitary student who read perpetually in his rooms and introduced some artistic method into their decoration. A curious parallel might be drawn between him and the late Mr. Walter Pater—both of them living secluded lives in college, both indefatigable workers, both so much in harmony with the personal note in nature, and both producing little, and that little so polished and exquisite. Gray's literary acquirements were immense; he had not merely studied the classics to advantage, but was thoroughly versed in medieval romance literature, in French and Italian poetry, and in that early Celtic and Scandinavian literature about which very few people cared just then. His learning, of course, had a very powerful influence upon his poetical work; his classical studies and his researches in the frigid Italian poets of the seventeenth century made him more than a common prey to the tedious method of allegory which we have already remarked in Collins, the constant personification of abstract qualities; it led also to a love of undiluted allusion which makes certain of his poems meaningless without a commentary. But his erudition is not the only thing in his work. For, judging him as poet alone, he stands at the place where two roads meet. He is the last poet who is troubled by classical formalism; he is the first poet who gives his testimony clearly on the side of romance. The *Elegy in a Country Churchyard* looks back to Thomson on the one hand, and forward to Wordsworth on the other. *The Progress of Poesy*, while retaining traces of the classical influence of Pope and his school, anticipates Shelley's freer treatment of myth and legend. *The Bard*, for all its Pindaric form, is, in its subject and the essential quality of its treatment, kindled by a love for medieval romance, while *The Descent of Odin* and *The Fatal Sisters* are the precursors of Scott's romantic ballads.

His erudition.

Critical importance of his work.

The work which has thus so much of the old spirit in its

external features, but, upon its more intellectual side, is so closely related to the new, although it can be contained in a mere pamphlet, was, in fact, the work of many careful years. He began to write in 1742, but it was not till 1747 that he published his *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College*; and his *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*, begun in 1742, was not finished before 1749, or published before 1750. These two poems, with the odes *On Spring* and *To Adversity*, the *Ode on the Death of a favourite Cat*, and *A Long Story*, were published in one volume in 1753, and make up Gray's contribution to the poetry of nature. If he is to be compared with Collins—and the comparison is more apparent than profitable—this is the part of his work in which the likeness is most obvious. The *Elegy* is one of the best-known poems in English, and to praise its peaceful and matured rhythm is now superfluous. The same spirit of philosophic contemplation prevails in the remaining odes; the same abstractions, Ambition, Luxury, Honour, and so on, appear with a far more numerous train in *Eton College* and the *Hymn to Adversity*, and aid Gray's wonderful talent for lending distinction to reflections which, without these ingenious devices, would be merely obvious. Above all Gray's merits in these early poems, above his great ingenuity, his employment of his learning, his careful art, and the pleasant musical chime of his verse, we see a curiously minute observation of scenery, a note of every detail of landscape, which turns almost every verse of the *Elegy* into a vignette of trees, fields, little streams, and distant village spires.

The "Elegy" (1750).

But the spirit of the two Pindaric odes, written between 1754 and 1757, and published in 1758, is more ambitious, and their range of view more extensive. *The Progress of Poesy* is, roughly speaking, a historic sketch, beginning with an invocation, proceeding with a description of the universal sway of poetry, and tracing its advance through Greece and Rome to England, where it culminates in the glory of Shakespeare, Milton, and Dryden. Although Gray deliberately chose to clothe his verse in a form more artificial than he had yet attempted, he moves freely in his fetters, and succeeds in shaking off any prosaic relics of trite classicism. His ode is not the usual Pindaric imitation which saw its original through two pairs of thick spectacles, French and Latin; it is derived at first hand from the Hellenic love of nature, and catches the spirit of the greatest nature-poetry the world has ever seen. Shelley, with his intimate feeling for Greek poetry, Byron, with his impassioned reverence for the greatness of historic Greece, wrote nothing more truly approximating to the charm of Greek lyric verse than Gray's lovely stanza, beginning "Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep." It belongs to that class of English lyrics which stand in the closest filial relation to the choruses of the great

"The Progress of Poesy" (1758).

Athenian dramatists; it has a fire and passion totally different from the philosophic melancholy of the *Elegy*, and, with this, a restraint of expression and a simplicity purely Hellenic; and, further, it leads the final stanzas of an ode, which up to this point has been picturesque and melodious enough, to a rare pitch of sublimity. The fire which is perceptible at the end of this poem communicates itself to the second Pindaric ode, *The Bard*. But *The Bard* has less of this obvious Hellenism, save in its outward form and its ascending scale of passion, in which alone it is comparable with *The Progress of Poesy*. It is a noble romantic poem, a historical prophecy put into the mouth of one of the Celtic bards whom Edward I slaughtered in his conquest of Wales, and forecasting the terrible warfare of the houses of Lancaster and York and the glories of the reign of Elizabeth. It shows us Gray's love of nature turning for its inspiration to Celtic myth and legend, to the tales of magic and second-sight which abounded among the mountains of Scotland and Wales. In short, it places him, even more nearly than his later *Descent of Odin*, in immediate connection with the masters of romance who were before long to have so abiding an influence in England. The growth of this affection for romantic subjects explains, and is partly explained by, the long journeys which Gray constantly made, about this time, to the North of England and Scotland. His *Diary of a Journey to the Lakes* in 1769, published after his death (1775), and describing a long delightful journey through Cumberland, Westmorland, and the wild passes of the Pennine chain, is full of passages which show how much he was at home in those mountain solitudes, and how the very bulk of hills, like "that huge creature of God, Ingleborough," and the constant changes of cloud and sunshine, delighted and fascinated him. He was one of the first of our modern poets who reconciled the discrepancies between the English and the Celtic attitude to nature, and introduced the awful charm of mountain scenery into English poetry. He is buried next his mother at Stoke Poges, in the churchyard which, in spite of the claims of numerous competitors, seems to have been the scene of his *Elegy*.

"The Bard" (1758).

Gray's travels and diary.

§ 5. The last poet of the group which may be said to include Thomson, Shenstone, Collins, and Gray, is the frigid MARK AKENSIDE, who was a distinguished physician as well as a poet. His father was a butcher at Newcastle-on-Tyne, and he was educated in the medical schools of Edinburgh and Leyden. His earliest work was a very juvenile poem in Spenserian stanza, *The Virtuoso* (1737), which, although written after Thomson had begun to write *The Castle of Indolence*, was published much earlier either than that Spenserian imitation or than Shenstone's *Schoolmistress*. *The Pleasures of Imagination* (1744) is a philo-

5. MARK AKENSIDE (1721–1770).

sophical poem in three books, investigating and illustrating the emotions excited in the human mind by beautiful objects in art and nature. Æsthetic treatises in prose are not always very interesting; in poetry they can only represent misapplied energy. The Thomsonian vein of description is lost in Akenside's monotonous and correct blank verse. His *Odes* (1745), in which we see him in direct relation to Collins and Gray, are cold and statuesque, without the compensating vitality of great sculpture. Akenside was saturated with classical learning; and his verse caught the classical stateliness of movement with none of its life. His *Hymn to the Naiads* (1758) is, perhaps, the only poem in which he wrote with fire and vivacity; he might have advanced still further in his art, but this was his last work. Till his death he devoted himself to medicine, and became a fellow of the Royal Society. He died early enough to earn a place in Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*.

§ 6. Before we pass on to Cowper and Crabbe, the chief members of the second period of nature-poetry, who form the link between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, there are one or two important features to be noticed in the history of the epoch whose principal poets we have just mentioned. The first of these is the service rendered to English poetry by the family of Warton. JOSEPH WARTON and THOMAS WARTON, the sons of a vicar and schoolmaster of Basingstoke, who had been fellow of Magdalen and Professor of Poetry at Oxford, both took a critical interest in the subject. Joseph became warden of Winchester; Thomas was fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, Professor of Poetry in the University, like his father, and for five years (1785–90) Poet Laureate. Both wrote original verses of no great merit, although Thomas Warton showed some capacity for sonnet-writing. Between 1774 and 1781 three volumes of a *History of English Poetry* by Thomas Warton were published; but these went only as far as the opening of the Elizabethan period; and, during the rest of their author's life, very little more was done. The idea of the history was, without doubt, taken from the rough sketch of a similar work left behind by Pope, which also came into Gray's hands and inspired him with the same notion. However, in the year before his death, he courteously resigned his project to his Oxford contemporary, with the result that Warton wrote a book which, although unfinished, is still of great importance to the student of literature. Joseph Warton intended to complete his younger brother's work—he survived him by ten years—but did not finish the task. In addition to this great undertaking, Thomas Warton published *Observations on The Faery Queen of Spenser* (1754) and an edition of Milton's minor poems (1785), and otherwise helped on the literary movement of his day by calling attention to pre-Restoration poetry. He was one of Johnson's dearest and

JOSEPH *and* THOMAS WARTON (1722–1800 *and* 1728–1790).

"*History of English Poetry*" (1774–1781).

most intimate friends, but this did not prevent the dictator of letters from making fun of his lyric verse. Joseph Warton's contribution to critical literature was an edition of Pope (1797), with an admirable essay on his subject.

§ 7. Secondly, we come to the two great literary forgeries of the middle of the eighteenth century—English and Scottish.

Literary forgeries: 1. THOMAS CHATTERTON (1752–1770).

The first of these, unscrupulous as it was, was certainly an example of genius. THOMAS CHATTERTON, after a short life of only eighteen years, died by his own hands at his lodgings in Brook Street, Holborn. He was the posthumous son of a schoolmaster and sub-chanter of Bristol Cathedral, and lived close to the magnificent church of St. Mary Redcliffe, one of the finest monuments of medieval devotion in England. His uncle happened to be the sexton of the church ; and the boy spent a great part of his childhood in exploring the building and filling himself with the spirit of its Gothic antiquity. Romantic enthusiasm of the kind was not widely spread in England, and it is a singular thing that this mere child should instinctively have formed a passion which, in those days of "neat edifices" and "handsome colonnades," was an unknown thing. His own education was received at Colston's Hospital in Bristol, and did not amount to very much ; all his learning was borrowed from the great church and the picturesque streets of the city, then crowded with overhanging gables and medieval buildings. Among the curiosities of St. Mary Redcliffe was a parvise chamber above the octagonal north porch, in which still exist a number of old chests. In one of these, called Canynge's coffer, had been preserved charters and other documents recording the benefactions of the great merchant, William Canynge, who had rebuilt the church in the reign of Edward IV ; many had been removed, but there remained a large mass of parchments which had been thrown aside as of no value, and had been used by Chatterton's father for covering his scholars' copybooks. Chatterton had picked up some knowledge of black-letter and heraldry ; and these documents gradually inspired him with the ingenious idea of forging a whole series of valuable manuscripts, which he pretended to have found in this muniment room, or to have transcribed from originals in Canynge's coffer. Meanwhile he was writing small poems and satires which gained him some reputation as a local prodigy. His leisure moments were probably occupied in practising the rudiments of his scheme.

This child of twelve produced by degrees a number of extraordinary compositions, with which he deceived the local newspapers and his acquaintances in the town—William Barrett, a surgeon, and George Catcott, a pewterer with a taste for heraldry, being among his first victims. On the occasion of the opening of a new bridge over the Avon he came forward with an account of processions, tournaments, and religious solemnities which had

The Rowley forgeries.

taken place at the opening of the old bridge; and at other public ceremonies he was to the fore with similar appropriate pieces. All of these he claimed as the work of a priest, historian, and poet named Thomas Rowley, whom he represented as Canynge's agent for collecting works of art, and as a local chronicler in Canynge's day. This was, on the face of it, very probable; and, if the Bristol citizens felt any suspicion, they were too vain to show it, and for four or five years were constantly supplied with fresh poems and historical information. In 1769 Chatterton, who was then sixteen, and had for some time been wishing to exchange his place in an attorney's office for a London life, sent to Horace Walpole, then writing his *Anecdotes of British Painters*, some manuscripts concerning painting in the Middle Ages. Walpole, whose own Gothic and romantic zeal was of a credulous order, readily accepted this further proof of the indefatigable Rowley's patriotic industry, and promised to befriend the young antiquary. Chatterton accordingly supplied him with more poems, which Walpole submitted to the judgment of Gray and William Mason. Their criticism, of course, broke the bubble and undeceived Walpole. In 1770 Chatterton, burning with pride and ambition, went up to London and tried his fortune with a small operatic piece called *The Revenge*. But the Rowley poems were now thoroughly discredited, and became a drug in the market. He found himself unable to live, and, after struggling with distress and starvation for a time, tore up all his manuscripts and poisoned himself with a dose of arsenic on the 24th of August, 1770, four months after his arrival in London. He had for some time, with his usual precocity, professed himself a deist; but he was free from the grosser vices, and was not only frugal and industrious, but was always an affectionate son and brother.

Chatterton's end.

Chatterton's forgeries are important to us, not merely because they were the most remarkable *juvenilia* of any English poet, but as a sign of the fact that the classical spirit had had its day, and that Restoration models of verse were to yield to something fresher, and, at the same time, older. Chatterton wrote by the light of nature and from an inborn love of medievalism; there is no trace of classical influence to be found in his work. While he was writing, Gray was passing through his great transition from the school of Thomson and its distinct element of classical tradition to the new romanticism; but here was a boy who, knowing nothing of any intermediate stage, was simply a disciple of romance from the very beginning. As regards the character of his writing, the forgeries are generally acknowledged to be better than the poems published under his own name. The principal works of the so-called Rowley which remain are the tragical interlude *Ælla*, the ballad of *Sir Charles Bawdwin*, the *Balade of Charitie*, and the pastoral *Elinoure and Juga*.

Significance of Chatterton's frauds.

All these show an admirable sense of natural beauty; but their medievalism, concealed under a garb of grotesque spelling, has really little in common with the reign of Edward IV.

Evidence for their spuriousness.

The original documents which Chatterton had produced, written with musty ink on artfully discoloured parchment, might have misled anybody at a period when there was no such thing as medieval scholarship, and the Bristol antiquaries were probably content with the appearance of them; but the orthography of the so-called transcripts was absurd. The irregular six-lined stanzas of *Ælla* were written in good, poetical, eighteenth-century English, spelt according to a method which accumulated consonants and created diphthongs with a transparently unreal prodigality, and bespattered here and there with words, not always rightly used, from old glossaries and dictionaries. Chatterton's acquaintance with old English forms (his grammar was quite contemporary), his heraldry, and his architecture, were all pieces of audacious guess-work. However, even after Gray and Mason had weighed his productions in the balance of their scholarship and found them wanting, his admirers were still to be found. Johnson and Boswell, when they went to Bristol, saw Catcott and Barrett and the famous chest in the muniment room, and heard firm asseverations of Rowley's authenticity; and, even in the present century, Chatterton's youth, ignorance, and misfortunes have had warm-hearted champions. The last doubt was dispelled by Dr. Skeat in 1871, who, by removing the accretions of spelling, proved either that Rowley must have anticipated the English of his age by three centuries, or that Chatterton knew nothing about the English of Rowley's day. These investigations, if they take the last shred of credit from Chatterton, reveal the actual value and beauty of his poetry. As Johnson said, "This is the most extraordinary young man that has encountered my knowledge. It is wonderful how the whelp has written such things."

§ 8. An even more famous and certainly more subtle case of literary forgery are the Ossianic poems of JAMES MACPHERSON,

Literary forgeries: 2. JAMES MACPHERSON (1736-1796) and the Ossianic poems.

a country schoolmaster in the Highlands. There seems to be no doubt that this clever improviser's Celtic lays were simply his own wares palmed off on the credulous multitude; but it is difficult to trace forgeries which profess to be transcripts from oral poetry; and it is probable that, for want of obvious evidence, they always will approve themselves to the uncritical reader as genuine. In 1759 Macpherson showed some Celtic fragments which he had collected in the Highlands, according to his own account, to Home, the author of *Douglas*. These were printed (1760), and, the public proving anxious for more, some eminent Scottish *literati*, including the amiable Boswell and the rhetorical Hugh Blair, supplied their ingenious friend with funds for a journey of

discovery in the Highlands. Accordingly, in 1762, Macpherson came back with a full-blown epic of the third century—the *Fingal*—which he published with a critical preface. In 1763 another epic, called *Temora*, a fragment of which had formed, with some others, a supplement to *Fingal*, was published. These translations were written in a declamatory and rather hysterical style, which showed, however, much real poetical feeling. Of course, they raised a controversy. Johnson, with critical sagacity, saw into the facts from the very first, and cultured opinion in England went with him. Macpherson had let some remarks slip about manuscripts. It was highly improbable that the Scottish Celts had preserved any written literature of the third century. There was also the minor consideration that the whole state of society represented in the epics was far too refined and chivalrous for the assumed date. On the other hand, the Highlanders, eager for the honour of their country, recklessly asserted the authenticity of the poems, and asserted that the name of Ossian, together with innumerable details of the epics, were familiar legends of their childhood. This belief extended to the Lowlands. Hugh Blair praised the poems to the skies, and compared Ossian to Homer and Virgil. However, the whole question rested on Macpherson's alleged manuscripts, which, critically and philologically examined, would have settled the difficulty; but Macpherson shuffled, declared that his honour was impeached, and eventually produced a few scraps that were not worth an atom. He kept up the deception to the end, thriving on it, and enjoying the respect of his countrymen; and, when he died, nothing was found to incriminate or to vindicate him. Later criticism has merely established that the hollow magnificence of the style is the result of continual plagiarism of phrase from the Bible, Homer, Shakespeare, Milton, and even Thomson; and that, although these poems are crowded with names and allusions which really abound in the old Erse and Gaelic legends, no entire poem, nor even any considerable fragment, has been found to correspond in the least with Macpherson's discoveries. Even the genuine remains of Celtic verse, few and scanty, which are attributed upon more solid grounds to Ossian, have a totally different character, and belong to a very much later age than the third century; for they contain allusions to Christianity, to which Macpherson, of course, was wise enough not to refer. But, as in the case of Chatterton's forgeries, the real importance of these poems lies in their appeal to the romantic side of antiquity. More than any other thing, they were the harbingers of the romantic movement, not only in Britain, but in the whole of Europe. Their gimcrack, overstrained romanticism inspired a similar spirit in poetry and painting—"daughters of the snow," "car-borne heroes," and the whole race of misty phantoms crowded the poems and pictures of the next half century. In Germany the admiration was long

Character of, and evidence against Ossian.

in subsiding. The Ossianic mania spread to Russia. The great Napoleon, no literary student, shared his favours between them and Machiavelli's *Prince*, and copied their flagrancies of style in his bulletins. Chatterton's poems, confining themselves for the most part to his native city, are a passing symbol of a change in popular taste. Macpherson, in choosing the most romantic and mysterious district of Europe as the theatre of his exploits, in clothing them with so exaggerated a panoply of words, gave a direct impulse to the growing spirit.

§ 9. A third point to be noticed with regard to the poetry of this period is the fondness for what may be called technical poems. John Philips' *Cyder* and William Somerville's *Chase* were succeeded by grave manuals in verse like John Armstrong's *Art of Preserving Health* or James Grainger's *Sugar-Cane*. Many of these poems, in spite of their apparent difficulty of treatment, show considerable power of execution and contain many excellent passages ; at all events, they show that their authors had some professional enthusiasm.

"Technical" poetry.

WILLIAM FALCONER (1732–1769). *"The Shipwreck"* (1762).

The most successful work of the kind was *The Shipwreck* of WILLIAM FALCONER, published in 1762, which described a real incident in its writer's life. He had sailed on board a merchant ship bound for Venice, which, meeting a violent gale in the Ægean, was wrecked on the dangerous rocks of Cape Colonna. Falconer was merely a common sailor ; and we can hardly expect a very high artistic standard from his poem. But the setting of his story is dramatic, and his use of nautical terms, which is said by authorities to be eminently correct, gives it a certain claim to minute realism. However, where Falconer is not too technical he is too grandiloquent ; the solemnity of the heroic couplet weighs him down, and to-day we are not constrained to read him either for his nautical accuracy or for his sublime polysyllables. At any rate, Falconer provided for future admirers of *The Shipwreck* in a *Universal Marine Dictionary* (1769), which should clear up his more obscure passages. He dedicated his poem to the Duke of York, and was made a purser in the navy. The frigate *Aurora*, in which he sailed, was last seen off the Cape in 1769, and is supposed to have sunk near the coast of Mozambique.

ERASMUS DARWIN (1731–1802). *"The Botanic Garden"* (1789–1792).

Another technical poet was the eccentric ERASMUS DARWIN, who was the king of Lichfield society, and quite surpassed Johnson in local reputation. It is unnecessary to say that this provincial doctor, the ancestor of a great family, was himself a man of genius, or that his *Zoonomia* (1794–6) was a magnificent contribution to scientific literature. He seems, however, to have thought that the Linnæan system would appeal to the English public in the form of verse, and so composed a very elaborate poem in the heroic couplet which, in its complete form, was called *The Botanic Garden*. Of its

two parts, the second, *The Loves of the Plants*, appeared first (1789); the first, less sensuous, but very digressive, was published in 1792 under the title of *The Economy of Vegetation*. Darwin was certainly no poet; he could make his verses scan and rhyme, personify his flowers under their Latin names, and surround them with a riot of hybrid epithets; but beneath this dazzling garb he is emphatically commonplace and unoriginal. The whole poem was written in good faith by an enthusiast, and was for the time being very popular, especially at Lichfield. Now it is entirely forgotten save by the curious, and exists merely as an aberration of genius. In manner, it is allied, of course, to the school of Pope; but none of the classical poets had ever carried the unnatural treatment of nature to so ludicrous an extreme. We may safely say that, to all who watched the signs of the times, Darwin's *Botanic Garden* was an object-lesson in the thorough decay of the Restoration school of poetry; while its utter coldness, its abuse of personation, and its tawdry vocabulary, cleared the last obstacles from the path of romantic poetry. The dead force of artifice could go no further.

Poets of the transition (1732–1800).

§ 10. The advance in the poetry of nature was very gradual. Between 1780 and 1800 four great poets appeared, who are in every way so different that they can hardly be said to constitute a school. At the same time, taken in order, Cowper, Crabbe, Blake, and Burns, form a quite comprehensible transition from the school of Thomson to the school of Wordsworth. The most directly transitional of the four is the oldest, WILLIAM COWPER. His father was rector of Great Berkhampstead; through his mother he claimed descent from Dr. Donne; his family was ancient, and his grand-uncle, the first Earl Cowper, had been Lord Chancellor. Naturally delicate and impressionable, he was unhappy both at a private school in Hertford and at Westminster, and his mother's death affected him very deeply. At first, on leaving Westminster, he was placed in an attorney's office, where one of his companions was the future Lord Chancellor Thurlow. He thus acquired some knowledge of law, and it seemed that a brilliant future was in store for him. But several things combined to spoil his prospects. In the first place, he was unhappy in his affection for his cousin; in the second place, the Evangelical movement exercised an unhealthy religious fascination on him, to whom the strength and support of more manly souls was sheer enervation. When, in 1763, he became a candidate for the comfortable Clerkship of the Journals of the House of Lords, he regarded the prospect of an examination in public with so sensitive a horror that his nerves gave way and he attempted suicide. He was sent to an asylum, where he recovered his intellect; but his morbid nature had been so deeply shaken that any active career was an impossibility. He had some money of his own, and, assisted by his family,

1. WILLIAM COWPER (1731–1800).

passed the remainder of his life in the country. At first he lived at Huntingdon, where he found a refuge in the family of a clergyman named Unwin; and, when Mr. Unwin died, he removed with the widow, his constant friend, to Olney, higher up the Ouse. Cowper was a charming and amiable person, and inspired love wherever he went; but his suicidal mania had given place only to recurring attacks of religious despair, which made him a constant source of anxiety to his friends. After his removal to Olney in 1767 he fell under the influence of the great Evangelical and Calvinistic teacher, John Newton, a man of strong nature, to whom religious discussion and constant self-analysis were a purifying tonic. The effect of the friendship on Cowper, so far as this world was concerned, was not improbably the reverse. Newton's rigid theology seems to have convinced and appalled him at one and the same time; and, in 1773, he suffered from a serious attack of melancholia. On his recovery he endeavoured to calm his shattered spirits with a variety of innocent amusements, gardening, carpentering, and taming hares; and it was not till this time, when he was between forty and fifty years old, that he began to cultivate poetry. His earliest poems were some of the *Olney Hymns* (1779), written in partnership with Newton, and containing some fine lyrics which are to-day in every hymn-book. When his first acknowledged volume, containing *Truth*, *The Progress of Error*, and other poems, was published (1782), he was more than fifty. *The Task* (1785), his longest poem, was undertaken at the suggestion of another Olney friend, Lady Austen, who gave him the Sofa as a subject for his skill. The rest of his verse, except the blank-verse translation of Homer (1791), was occasional; it gained him, however, great popularity. In 1786 he left Olney and wandered about, never remaining in one place for very long. Mrs. Unwin died in 1796. He survived his friend for four years, and ended his sad and blameless life at East Dereham, where he is buried.

His country life.

His poetry and later life.

When we say that Cowper's poetry is directly transitional from the early school of nature-poets to the revolutionary school of Wordsworth, the expression implies certain reservations. The outer form of his work shows no appreciable advance on Thomson. *The Task*, externally, is not far removed from *The Seasons*. Even in his lighter pieces, or in a lyric like *Boadicea*, there is very little to tell us of the coming century. *Boadicea*, apart from its processional metre, is neat and precise—a very clever copy of verses without any subtle elements of passion. The *sæva indignatio* of the Queen is rhetorical; the one romantic feature of the poem is its subject. *John Gilpin*, again, which is perhaps incomparably the best-known of Cowper's poems, is a typical eighteenth-century *jeu d'esprit*, like Goldsmith's *Mad Dog*, and

Transitional character of Cowper's work.

many others. But the spirit which fills the bulk of Cowper's work is a different thing from the spirit of Thomson or Gray. Their attitude to nature, it is generally agreed, had been modelled upon, or at least had been stirred by the æsthetic principles of Shaftesbury; they wrote as genial philosophers who looked on nature with a kind of pantheistic optimism; they endeavoured to keep their own observation in touch with a criterion of the ideal and sublime established by others. As we have seen, Cowper was moved by an entirely different influence; his view of life and nature was oppressed by that sense of sin and misery which, since the great days of the medieval Church, had been an unknown thing in England. The Evangelical movement in the English Church goes hand in hand with the earlier, as the Oxford movement went hand in hand with the later developments of romanticism; it helped to bring back the sense of mystery and marvel in nature, and to destroy the remains of that complacency with which the earlier poets of the nature-movement had regarded their surroundings. We shall not go far wrong in recognising this change in religious thought as the mainspring of Cowper's poetic quality. Not that Cowper's verse reflects, as a rule, the unhappy pessimism which afflicted his mind and makes so gloomy an appearance in his last poem, *The Castaway*, nor that it adopts any lofty theological or didactic tone. It is rather in his prevailing tranquillity, in his love for common and ordinary objects, for the flat meadow-land of the plain through which the Ouse wanders erratically, for the simple pleasures of his fireside and a restful country life that this permeating influence shows itself. Without it Cowper might have written poetry, but he could never have occupied the place which he fills. The best side of his religion, its tenderness, its amiability, its cheerful humour, comes out in his work. When he satirised the vices and follies of his day he wrote with the genuine indignation of offended piety. And, although his lyric poetry is not of the highest stamp, although he wrote few lines memorable for the sake of their exquisite music, their advance in natural feeling is obvious to the reader who looks below the surface. Everything he wrote is simple, but its simplicity is never bald; still less did he fall into the error of tricking out well-worn remarks in classical allusion. Himself of good family and breeding, his verse is essentially refined. In short, his natural good taste and his religious ardour fostered, between them, a delicate, fragile form of verse which has the new gift of looking straight at things without first putting on the spectacles of philosophy. If, in its outer forms—as, for instance, in the blank verse of *The Task*—Cowper's poetry recalls Thomson's, its spirit, its whole faculty and method of observation, bring it into close connection with Wordsworth.

Connection between his religion and his poetry.

Good taste of all his work.

§ 11. GEORGE CRABBE and Cowper are at one, first, in their adherence to a tradition of form; secondly, in their simple rejection of no created thing as common or unclean. Otherwise, there is a considerable divergence. Crabbe was born at the little Suffolk seaport of Aldeburgh, where his father was receiver of the customs duties on salt and part-owner of a fishing-boat. His childhood was miserable through bodily weakness and the sight of continual quarrels between his parents; but his early thirst for knowledge was encouraged by his father, who had been at one time a schoolmaster. At first he was apprenticed to a surgeon and apothecary in Aldeburgh, but he was too fond of literature and botany to succeed in his profession. Accordingly, in 1780, he determined to seek his fortune in London, where he arrived with £3 and a few poems in his pocket. As a tentative effort he published *The Candidate*. But nothing came of it. After some stay in London he found himself reduced to despair and threatened with imprisonment for a debt of £14 which he had contracted. He applied to his friends in Aldeburgh, but they would not assist him; and, reduced to extremities, he wrote a manly and affecting letter to Edmund Burke, who immediately admitted him to his house and friendship. From this moment his fortune changed. He was assisted both with money and advice in bringing out his poem, *The Library* (1782), was induced to take Holy Orders, and was promised the influence of Lord Chancellor Thurlow. For some time he lived at Belvoir as domestic chaplain to the Duke of Rutland. The position, not altogether enviable at a time when the inferior clergy were treated as useful without much attention to their ornamental capacities, seems to have been irksome to Crabbe, but enabled him to marry a lady to whom he had long been attached. After leaving Belvoir he lived at his Lincolnshire parsonage of Muston, to which he returned subsequently after an absence of nine years in Suffolk, and had ample leisure for his botany and literary work. However, from 1785 to 1807, a period which very nearly covers his life in Lincolnshire and Suffolk, he published nothing. Before this interval of silence, in which he was engaged in parochial duties and with his family, and probably wrote just as he felt inclined, he had brought out two more poems. *The Village* (1783) came under the chastening eye of Johnson—then in the last year but one of his life—who corrected and revised the manuscript; it was followed by *The Newspaper* (1785). Then, after twenty-two years, came *The Parish Register* (1807), *The Borough* (1810), *Tales in Verse* (1812), and *Tales of the Hall* (1819). In 1814 Crabbe left the East for the West of England, and, for the last eighteen years of his life, was vicar of Trowbridge in Wiltshire, where he died at the age of seventy-eight.

2. GEORGE CRABBE (1754–1832).

The fibre of Crabbe's verse is as coarse as that of Cowper's is delicate. In his use of the rhymed couplet he took Dryden

as his model, and, although no one could be less Drydenian in choice of subject and in his whole mental attitude, he proved an effective imitator. One or two pieces, composed of quatrains in lines of four syllables, like *Sir Eustace Grey* and *The Hall of Justice*, are to be found among his poems; but, even in his best work, written after the beginning of the nineteenth century, he continued to adhere faithfully to his Alexandrine measure. This, and this only, binds him emphatically to the older poets; it is as though, in that reactionary spirit which characterised all the great poets of his era, he went back, behind the school of Thomson and the age of Pope, to search for something more nearly allied to nature. But, in his subject and the method of its treatment, he struck that note of homeliness which was a new sound in English literature. All his longer works are constructed upon a peculiar and similar plan. He starts with some description — the village, the parish church, or the borough—choosing some place or thing that was perfectly familiar to him. His borough, for example, is a decayed seaport town like his native Aldeburgh. Then, after this vigorous opening picture, he goes on to a series of episodes springing appropriately from the main subject. *The Parish Register* suggests the story of various births, marriages, and deaths recorded in it; the beginning of *The Borough* leads up to the lives and adventures of the principal characters in its narrow streets. The *Tales in Verse* are a set of similar anecdotes, each complete in itself; and, in the *Tales of the Hall*, two brothers whose paths in life have been separated from boyhood meet in old age and compare experiences. The ballad of *Sir Eustace Grey* is the terrible autobiography of a madman; in *The Hall of Justice* a gipsy criminal tells an even more fearful story of crime and retribution. In all these pieces there is a passion, a realism, a grasp of true humour which, since the Restoration, had been the rarest thing in poetry. Crabbe thoroughly knew and analysed the hearts of men; and his study of humanity concentrated itself upon the virtues, vices, weakness, and heroism of the poor. His method was stern but not unloving; like the method of almost all great realists in anatomising their fellows, it is at its best where its subject is most unattractive, where there are no temptations to idealistic description. Consequently, Crabbe's best pictures are the gloomy portraits of people like the village tyrant, the smuggler, the miserly old maid, the pauper, and the criminal; or of objects like the squalid streets of the fishing-town, the fen, the quay, and the heath. In painting the agonies of remorse and the wandering reason of sorrow and crime he is a master, and his extraordinary command of pathos in these situations is often very nearly unendurable. The point of his method is a simplicity whose results are singularly vivid and

Link between Crabbe and the older poets.

Homeliness of his poetry.

Its realism.

intense; he does not make common things sublime, but touches their note of distinction, and it is in this that he is one of the great masters of realism. There is something Flemish in his art; in his isolated portraits there is a reminiscence of the sombreness of Rembrandt; his *genre* pictures, with their beggars and drunkards, take us back to Jan Steen and Teniers.

§ 12. In WILLIAM BLAKE we see a figure which detaches itself from the ordinary course of political history. No writer is entirely free from external influences; and in Blake the healthful fascination of Shakespeare and the Elizabethan poets generally worked side by side with the attractions of Ossian. Like Rossetti, who was in no small degree ruled by his memory, he was at once poet and painter; in addition, there existed in him a vein of insanity which led him into extraordinary rhapsodies of mystic philosophy. His life was passed in London, and contains no events beyond his marriage to Catherine Boucher—who was in the best sense of the word his constant help-meet—and the publication of his books—the *Poetical Sketches* (1783), the *Songs of Innocence* (1789), the *Songs of Experience* (1794), and, between and after these two last, the erratic prophetical books. The last, which are partly biblical, partly Ossianic in manner—more Ossianic, perhaps, than biblical, and certainly more biblical than Ossian—need no further mention. Of the others, the first, containing, among other things, the extravagant but admirable play of *Edward the Third*, was published by subscription; the other two were brought out in a most original form by the author and his wife. The poems and illustrations were engraved together on copper-plate; and, when once in print, the illustrations were coloured by hand. Design and poetry have seldom gone so well together. Blake had a peculiar gift of lyric writing which amounted to an instinct. It is true that it was very closely akin to the glorious gift of the Elizabethan dramatists; but no mere imitator could possess the full treasure in the same degree as Blake. He was an exquisite song-writer of the great lyric era born out of due season, standing, at the same time, a herald of the new lyric outburst which he lived to see. His position is, however, isolated. He prophesied, not on the common meeting-ground of poets, but from a little peak of his own, where he indulged his own whims and fancies. He belongs to no order of poets; he is a Stylites of verse, following his own irregular rules. Not a little of his success is to be attributed to his unquestionable insanity and to the veil of mystery through which he looked at life. In his paintings, as in his books of prophecy, this is obvious. His illustrations to the Book of Job, his most famous works in art or poetry, display an original and sublime mysticism which is a very different thing from the

3. WILLIAM BLAKE (1757-1827).

His lyric poetry.

Mystic and romantic character of his imagination.

transcendentalism—often so artificial and affected—of later poets and painters. But the mysticism of his lyrics has very little that is really terrible, although much that is merely eccentric. They are delicate pieces of work, the worst of them marred by Ossianic frenzy, the best of them extremely perfect and simple. That their simplicity is bizarre and unusual, that they are full of the quality which has in more recent years been known as symbolism, that their concrete subjects are always pregnant with a mystery struggling into shape—this is merely the distinctive feature of Blake's art. He lived in exaltation amid the unseen; his life was passed in a haze, as it were, of solemn fancy; and his lyrics were the principal link between himself and a world which was to his mind a shadowy projection of hidden and unfathomable secrets.

§ 13. That delight in the external aspect of nature, in the sights and sounds of the material world which had so abstract a meaning for Blake, ran riot in ROBERT BURNS, the greatest, beyond all comparison, of Scottish poets. He was the son of a small farmer of the yeoman class, and was born at Alloway, about two miles south of Ayr. The state of popular education in Scotland was then in striking contrast to the general dulness and sleepiness of education in the rest of Europe; and Burns, partly by his father's wisdom, partly by his own zeal for knowledge, acquired a degree of learning which would have been surprising in any other country. He had a good general acquaintance with English literature; and, although he became essentially the poet of the Lowland vernacular, he could use the English of the Southron, and cultivated it not only in several poems but in his prose letters. His passions and instincts were unusually strong. The pastoral country which surrounded his birth-place was part of him from the very first, and filled him with poetry. While he laboured on his father's farm he was writing the lyrics which were the tangible expression of his whole nature, into which the fields and moors and the song of the northern birds had entered so early. Farming did not prove a very successful occupation. A joint venture with his brothers failed; and he had serious thoughts of leaving Scotland for the West Indies. It was in order to raise funds for his emigration that he published his poems in the Kilmarnock edition of 1786. They had a great local popularity, which spread to Edinburgh. He did not emigrate, but went to Edinburgh to publish a second edition, which brought him fame and made him the fashionable idol of the Scottish capital. Success was certainly bad for him. His misfortunes already had tempted him to drink and other vices, which, it is only fair to add, were thought very little of then, and have been as much exaggerated by later moralists; his popularity in Edinburgh proved a further snare, and unfitted him for returning to country life. His excesses, however, were the blemishes of a character which had far more independence

4. ROBERT BURNS (1759–1796).

and dignity than we are accustomed to think. At Edinburgh he fell into fresh embarrassments, and, after a happy and irregular winter, went to Ellisland in Dumfriesshire, married a girl called Jean Armour, and became partly farmer, partly exciseman. His duties in the Excise were arduous and badly paid, and, as may be imagined, did not tend to promote temperance. Moreover, he was so incautious in his praise of the French Revolution that he got into serious trouble with the Government and his admirers. His strong constitution was completely undermined; he lost money and became extremely poor, and died of a fever at Dumfries in 1796, while he was still in his thirty-eighth year.

Burns is, without qualification or exception, a Scottish poet; his verses in formal and uninspired English do not concern us.

Burns' natural lyric genius: its relation to Scotland.

He could not write, like Milton, in one language as well as in another. Moreover, his connection with previous English poetry is absolutely non-existent; his influence south of the Tweed is very slender. It was of Scotland and for Scotland that he wrote; and, so far as his work affected England, it was in teaching the lesson of sympathy with a race which the ordinary Englishman, separated from it by a thousand old rancours and differences, hitherto had misunderstood. Again, it is hardly necessary to say that there is nothing Ossianic in Burns. The Scottish element in Ossian, which is eminently superficial, comes from the far North and has nothing to do with Burns' part of the country. But Burns' genius, great as it is, is not altogether isolated; his deeply-rooted kinship with nature had precedent in that line of Lowland singers which had "kept the lamp of Doric song alight" all through the obscuring artificialities of the century, from the days of Francis Sempill to those of Robert Fergusson. Burns marks the point at which this slender but impetuous lyric stream, dashing in its narrow bed through far moorlands, broadens into a wider channel in *Marmion* and *The Lady of the Lake*, until it finds its escape into the great river of English poetry. For Burns, writing in a dialect unintelligible to Southern ears, is, in the first place, a parochial poet, a poet who can, perhaps, be fully understood and appreciated only by his own countrymen.

We must not conclude, however, that he stands upon the ordinary level of local poets. The parish with which he identified himself was wide; it was a famous country,

Its wider relationships.

not so wild or romantic as the distant Highlands, but picturesque in no common degree. And everything that is typically Scottish, from the Carse of Stirling to the Tweed, from Ayr and the Firth of Clyde to Leith and the coasts of Fife, is embodied and enshrined in Burns' lyrics. Shakespeare is no more the typical poet of England than Burns is of the Scottish Lowlands; and, just as one may find running through all Shakespeare's poetry the thread of

his early impressions of Warwickshire and the vale of Avon, so, in Burns, the dominant note sounds from Ayrshire and its rural solitudes. To institute any comparison between Shakespeare and Burns would be ridiculous. But the touchstone of great poetry is its kinship to the Shakespearean spirit, the degree in which it approaches that rare and unrivalled grasp of nature, that criterion of true humour. In this respect few poets stand the test like Burns. His humour is of the broadest and, at the same time, of the most refined; he has a perception of natural beauty which is most delicate and yet most powerful; his style, with its negligence and fluency, is supremely finished. In these things, and, above all, in the complete harmony of robust merriment with tender pathos and in the human interest with which he invests material objects, Burns stands in the closest relation to Shakespeare. As a rule his poems are occasional lyrics, chiefly songs; he never wrote any long work; his most continuous pieces are his narratives and satires. Chief among his narratives is the famous *Tam o' Shanter*, the scene of which is his native place of Alloway. Tam, a drunken ne'er-do-weel of a horse-couper, traversing a dreary moor at that hour of night when, according to ancient tradition, all demons and witches have power, passes near the old ruined kirk of Alloway, and to his surprise finds it lighted up. He has taken, as we say, more than is good for him, and, under the influence of Dutch courage, steals close to the window, looks in, and sees the witches' sabbath in full swing. Unable to conceal his delight at the agility of one of the dancers, he attracts their attention and is pursued by the whole band until he can cross a running stream and so defeat their power of enchantment. He is just in time to escape, and the tail of his grey mare remains as a trophy in the hands of his pursuers. As a masterpiece of description and humour this *jeu d'esprit* stands first of Burns' longer poems. Another admirable piece, narrative in its general framework but set thick with glorious songs, is *The Jolly Beggars*. Careless vagabond jollity, roaring mirth, and gipsy merriment have never been so well expressed; while, in spite of his disreputable subject, Burns never sinks to the vulgarity of artificial and unreal pieces like *The Beggar's Opera*; his ragged bacchanals are perfectly natural and even graceful. In his way, Burns was a moralist, and mixed up his humour with a good deal of easy religious speculation and more serious social philosophy. *The Twa Dogs*, for instance, discusses and compares elaborately the relative degree of virtue and happiness granted to the rich and the poor, and decides, with considerable justice, that the balance is fairly even. His description in this poem of the joys and consolations of the poor man's lot is repeated in the more generally popular *Cotter's Saturday Night*, which is written in stanzas and in a language less provincial. But just as in his native Doric Burns is always better than in his

Its humour: "Tam-o'-Shanter," etc.

adopted English, so *The Cotter's Saturday Night*, much the best of his anglicised pieces, is inferior in broad accent and native pathos to *The Twa Dogs*. Certainly no nobler tribute than these two poems has ever been given to the virtues of the peasant class. Again, his singular command of pathos and humour can nowhere be better seen than in his poem dealing with rustic fortune-telling on *Hallowe'en*; in *The Vision of Liberty*, where he confides his early ambitions; in the wailing sorrow of the *Lament for Glencairn*; in *Scotch Drink*, the *Haggis*, the lines on Captain Grose, the *Elegy on Captain Matthew Henderson*; in the description of the old ewe Mailie's death, and in the poet's address to his old mare. Examples of this same humour and truth to nature are seen in every page of Burns, and, from his shorter lyrics and songs, the famous lines, *On Turning up a Mouse's Nest with the Plough*, and the similar piece on the *Mountain Daisy*, must always remain the chief instances of his lyric tenderness and beauty.

The metrical form of Burns' songs, so various and so unconstrained, was admirably adapted to the spirit of his poetry. In verses like *Duncan Gray* there is absolutely no trace of forced or artificial feeling; the song lilts its way along to the simplest of tunes, without roulades or practised shakes; the form is exactly appropriate to the everyday subject; the lyric is direct, colloquial, and graceful. We could hardly expect that all the songs should reach this level, this intensity of feeling, this condensed force of picturesque expression, this admirable melody of flow. As has been said, when Burns wrote in English, he wrote as tamely as a school-boy at a Latin exercise. But the great bulk of his Scottish lyric verse gives little room for unfavourable discrimination. The song-writer has a very limited range of subject; he cannot go far beyond love, patriotism, and pleasure. Burns succeeded in the very difficult task of giving a practically limitless variety to this narrow repertory. The whole essence of a thousand love-poems is concentrated in the passionate song *Ae fond kiss, and then we sever*; the heroic outburst of patriotism in *Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled* is a lyric of true Tyrtæan force; while, in calmer moments of sadness and reminiscence, songs like *Ye Banks and Braes* form the bond of union between personal sentiment and the beauties of external nature. Or again, in those old songs which he worked up or rewrote, fitting them to their traditional melodies, there is a power and freshness altogether new. If we look for defects we shall find them, not in his perfect command of natural form, but in such a coarseness of satire as we see in the personalities of *Holy Willie's Prayer* and *The Holy Fair*, in his artificial and at the same time very innocent republicanism, and, now and then—this is especially the case with the English poems—in a vulgar and misplaced ornament which stands in tawdry contrast to the general simplicity of his style.

Burns' natural use of metre.

§ 14. While these new forces were asserting themselves in poetry, the English drama, so far as any question of evolution is concerned, was at a standstill. Tragedy simply died out. The fatal correctness of Addison's *Cato* is a cheering and lively quality compared with the ineptitude of Thomson's tragedies, the dreariness of Johnson's *Irene*, and the tame heroics of Home's once famous *Douglas*. But the century produced four great comedies. Of these Goldsmith's pair, to which we already have alluded, were by far the most original. Sheridan's, of which we are going to speak, were, in a great measure, brilliant and ingenious adaptations. However, apart from these, the century showed some talent for farce-writing. DAVID GARRICK, the greatest actor since the days of Burbage and Alleyn, was not himself without some talent of this kind, and, while he sedulously kept alive the great memories of the Elizabethan theatre, wrote or freely adapted comic pieces like *The Lying Valet* (1741) and *Miss in her Teens* (1747), and put on the stage plays like *The Suspicious Husband* (1747) of Benjamin Hoadly (a son of the latitudinarian bishop) and the *High Life below Stairs* (1759) of James Townley. Many of these amusing pieces were seen on the English stage until the modern growth of comedy crowded them out, while Garrick's adaptation (1766) of Wycherley's *Country Wife* still makes a periodical appearance.

Drama from 1750–1800.

DAVID GARRICK (1717–1779).

The pedigree of eighteenth century farce is to be traced back to Vanbrugh through the intermediate stage of Colley Cibber, who was not precisely a genius, but nevertheless has been very badly slighted, and certainly managed to adapt and imitate the boisterous master of roaring comedy with considerable success. From Cibber there is a considerable descent to SAMUEL FOOTE, the merry-andrew who pleased his day with atrocious puns and immoderate caricature. One of his farces, *The Mayor of Garratt* (1763), lived longer than himself; but the majority of them rest in badly-printed little books on the shelves of old libraries. Foote had very little sense of decency, and his humour is a poor vamped-up edition of Vanbrugh's. Meanwhile, the moral tone of the stage had improved. Steele's comedies had shown that it was possible to be amusing without being indecent; Garrick's plays were a proof of the same thing. The age would not have tolerated *The Country Wife*, but it was pleased by *The Country Girl*. When Garrick joined GEORGE COLMAN, the elder, in *The Clandestine Marriage* (1766), they produced a play which certainly deserves an honourable place. Indeed, Mr. Gosse, a critic of eminent judgment in these matters, puts it above *The Good-Natur'd Man*. At the same time, while pieces like this and Goldsmith's comedies were a distinct and pleasant echo of the great post-Restoration dramatists, the vogue of another kind of drama

SAMUEL FOOTE (1720–1777).

GEORGE COLMAN (1732–1794).

was quite as pronounced. False sentiment, springing partly from the French stage, partly from the hysterical tearfulness of the second-rate tragic writers in the previous century, made HUGH KELLY (1739–1777)—an Irishman who, on his first appearance as a man of letters, took care to inform the public that he was a staymaker—exceedingly popular. Later in the century RICHARD CUMBERLAND, the author of *The West Indian* (1771) and other dramas, carried on this sickly tradition with considerably more power, sense of construction, and vivacity of dialogue. He was a great-grandson and namesake of the laborious Bishop Cumberland of Peterborough. Of course there were numerous other writers who, in their time, achieved some ephemeral distinction. But, apart from Sheridan, the only important comic writer at the end of the century, when Mrs. Inchbald was the chief representative of sentiment and artificial pathos, was GEORGE COLMAN (1762–1836), the younger, whose *Heir-at-Law*, following the lines pursued by his father and Goldsmith, and acted first in 1797, is an excellent farce, full of absurd incidents. In this and in *The Poor Gentleman* (1801), which unfortunately borrowed its pathos from *Tristram Shandy*, there is a constant buoyancy reminding us of the greater genius of Farquhar.

RICHARD CUMBERLAND (1732–1811).

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN came of a famous Irish stock, and of a mother to whom we have already referred as a novelist. Johnson's criticism of his father, the actor, is well known. "Why, sir, Sherry is dull, naturally dull; but it must have taken him a great deal of pains to become what we now see him. Such an excess of stupidity, sir, is not in nature." However, this paragon's son was a far brighter person. He was educated at Harrow, and, when he was only twenty-two, distinguished himself by eloping with Miss Elizabeth Linley, a charming young lady of Bath, who had a wonderful voice. Two years later he wrote *The Rivals* (1775), which was quickly followed by a series of comic pieces and small farces. In most of these Sheridan used materials derived from Vanbrugh or Wycherley; for example, Lord Foppington, in *A Trip to Scarborough* (1777), was simply a transfer from Vanbrugh's *Relapse*, and the whole play was a free adaptation of the older piece; or again, the famous gossiping scenes in *The School for Scandal* are rather more than an echo of similar passages in Wycherley's *Plain Dealer*. In fact Sheridan used the great post-Restoration comedies as their authors had used Molière. *The School for Scandal* itself belongs to 1777, and, in 1779, Sheridan closed his illustrious dramatic career with *The Critic*. Long after (1799) he produced another kind of play, *Pizarro*, at Drury Lane; but this adds nothing to his reputation. In 1780 he exchanged the drama for politics, and became a famous Whig orator. In the Warren Hastings impeachment he joined with Burke, but, on the outbreak of the French Revolution, Sheridan

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN (1751–1816).

went in the opposite direction from Burke, and supported the Radical movement. While he was making his name in politics he also became a power in society. In 1777 Johnson himself had proposed him for election to the Literary Club; and his extraordinary wit and humour made him popular all his life. In later years he became a boon companion of the Prince Regent, and gave himself overmuch to conviviality. He was terribly extravagant and always in debt; and eventually, when he died, there were bailiffs in his house. He was buried in princely pomp, amid the applause of an admiring country.

Byron said of Sheridan that he had made the best speech, and written the best comedy, the best opera, and the best farce. The greater fame of Burke has obscured his brilliant rhetoric. The speech on the Begums of Oude still lives, but merely as a surprising *tour de force* of a clever orator. *The Duenna* (1775) is doubtless an excellent opera, and compares favourably with its predecessors and successors in that kind of writing; but there is absolutely no doubt that the merits of *The School for Scandal* and *The Critic* have, so far as nine-tenths of English readers are concerned, quite thrown into the shade the splendours of the Stewart and Orange comedy and the extravagant humour of *The Rehearsal*. The old dramatists, for their neglect of decency, paid the ultimate penalty by suffering neglect from posterity; an ingenious successor like Sheridan, who appropriated their best qualities without their licentiousness, held the stage to their exclusion, and holds it to-day. *The School for Scandal* is a brilliant comedy of manners, rich in satiric humour and polished dialogue, and displaying a command of dramatic situation which is by no means the crowning merit of Congreve or Wycherley; but, as a literary masterpiece, it is not for one moment to be compared with *The Way of the World* or *Love for Love*; to compare it with any of Wycherley's plays is to set a brilliant and accurate copy side by side with its original. Sheridan, with all his quickness of apprehension and his faculty of training his own style to something of the same refinement, missed the fine and perfect subtlety of his models, failed to catch their discriminating delicacy of touch. In *The School for Scandal* we have the one work in which he approached perfection, in which he shows us the best of his genius. There is a great deal in *The Critic* that is extravagant and amusing, and is almost unsurpassed in the literature of burlesque; it is a great *jeu d'esprit*, which by itself would have given Sheridan an irregular niche in literature like that of Buckingham. His earliest comedy, *The Rivals*, with its immortal characters, excellent scenes, and finished dialogue, is nevertheless, compared with *The School for Scandal*, a very disjointed and unequal production, and the scenes between those fastidious lovers, Falkland and Julia, could not well be more tedious. But, if the accidental taste of the contemporary

His comedies.

"The School for Scandal" (1777).

"The Rivals" (1775).

playgoer, and its generous endorsement by an even more civilised posterity, have raised Sheridan to a too exalted pinnacle among comic writers, and have chosen to forget or degrade those masters of whose system of borrowing he so liberally availed himself, those dramatists themselves are at least something to blame for their own deposition; while Sheridan, in any case, remains the greatest of those who succeeded to their laurels, and *The School for Scandal* divides the honours of the later stage with *She Stoops to Conquer*.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

MINOR POETS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

A.—From 1700 to 1750.

John Armstrong (1709–1779), a fellow-countryman, friend, and imitator of Thomson, was a physician in London, and devoted himself to celebrating his art in Thomsonian blank verse. His poem bears the unpromising title of *The Art of Preserving Health*; but he brought to it an easy faculty of verse, and the result is not nearly so bald and pompous as we might expect. This was in 1744, and was not Armstrong's first experiment. However, after the death of his friend and master, he became more prolific, wrote epistles and, in 1754, a tragedy, *The Forced Marriage* (published 1770), and, under the *nom de plume* of Lancelot Temple, published a book of essays (1758). Armstrong was fond of outlandish words and phrases, and anticipated the extravagance of Erasmus Darwin; but he was a much better poet, and was one of the most distinguished members of the Thomsonian school.

Robert Blair (1699–1746), parish minister of Athelstaneford in East Lothian, published in 1743 a remarkable poem called *The Grave*, which, during the next half century, according to Boswell, "passed through many editions, and is still much read by people of a serious cast of mind." Blair was not exactly Thomsonian, although he wrote in blank verse which often approaches the manner of *The Seasons*. It has been pointed out that he was much indebted to the Jacobean dramatists. From time to time his verse falls into a succession of hendecasyllabic lines with weak endings and interjectional pauses, which exactly recall the scansion of Massinger; and the morbid spirit of the poem is thoroughly in tune with the spirit of the later school of playwrights. Blair may be compared with Young; but he wrote with more freedom and less dulness.

Henry Brooke (1703?–1783), an Irish country gentleman from county Cavan, is now remembered as the author of the curious romance called *The Fool of Quality, or The Adventures of Henry, Earl of Moreland*, which came out in the same year as *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766). Thirty-one years before (1735) this eccentric gentleman had published a long poem in six serial parts, bearing the portentous title of *Universal Beauty*. It was in the heroic couplet, and showed a wonderful acquaintance with the philosophical side of science. Like all the metaphysical poetry of the age, it was much in the debt of the accomplished Shaftesbury. Brooke's style was very hybrid, and he affected the same Græco-Latinisms as Armstrong in the next decade and Erasmus Darwin forty-four years later; but he constantly reminds us, as they very seldom do, of Lucretius; and, although this reminiscence is rather distant, it supplies a good test of his success in dealing with a difficult subject. In 1739 Brooke brought out a tragedy, *Gustavus Vasa*, which, owing to political allusions, was suppressed by the Lord Cham-

berlain; this not only brought the author into controversy, but provoked an ironical *Complete Vindication of the Licensers of the Stage* from Samuel Johnson, then struggling for a livelihood in London.

ISAAC HAWKINS BROWNE (1706–1760) of Trinity College, Cambridge, one of the first wits of this country, "got into Parliament" for Much Wenlock "and never opened his mouth." He wrote a Latin poem (1754) in imitation of Lucretius, and published (1736) *A Pipe of Tobacco*, a series of six parodies, aimed at Cibber, Ambrose Philips, Thomson, Young, Pope, and Swift.

JOHN BYROM (1692–1763) was an eccentric man of letters. He went to Trinity College, Cambridge, got his fellowship, fell in love with Joan Bentley, who, in those days of strife, was the one bond of affection between the Master's Lodge and the College, and wrote in her honour the well-known pastoral in the *Spectator*—"My time, O ye muses, was happily spent." Later on he retired to his native place, Manchester, where he became a physician, and patented a system of shorthand. During the '45, in which Manchester played a conspicuous part, he was a strong but cautious Jacobite. His views and attitude are well expressed in his famous epigram—

God bless the King, God bless our faith's defender,
God bless—no harm in blessing—the Pretender;
But who Pretender is, and who is King,
God bless us all! that's quite another thing.

At the close of his life he fell under the influence of William Law's mystical treatises, and in a poem called *Enthusiasm* (1751) versified his master's thoughts in the heroic couplet much as Brooke and the others had versified Shaftesbury. His very miscellaneous works, including his journals, have been preserved by the local patriotism of the Chetham Society in Manchester, who, at long intervals, have published the whole body.

JOHN DYER (1700?–1758) was born at Aberglasney in Carmarthenshire and educated at Westminster. He began life as a painter and student of the picturesque, travelled much in Wales, and went to study his art in Italy. Eventually he wrote poetry and took Holy Orders. *Grongar Hill*, a descriptive poem in a sing-song metre and rhyme which is often slovenly, was published in 1726: and thus Dyer, by a happy accident of temperament, became one of the first poets who showed the way to nature. Another short poem, *The Country Walk*, followed the same lines; but, in his later life, Dyer allowed himself to become didactic, and wrote *The Ruins of Rome* (1740) and *The Fleece* (1757). "The subject, sir," said Johnson, "cannot be made poetical. How can a man write poetically of serges and druggets!" But Wordsworth, at the beginning of the next century, praised Dyer's imagination and style; and Gray, who saw in the poet a kindred spirit, wrote to Walpole, "Dyer has more of poetry in his imagination than any of our number, but rough and injudicious." Posterity has more or less consented to forget the author of *The Fleece*, but *Grongar Hill* may be still remembered.

RICHARD GLOVER (1712–1785), a London merchant and member of Parliament for Weymouth, was, in poetry, a follower of Thomson, and, in politics, an opponent of Walpole. In the length of *Leonidas* (1737) and its posthumous sequel *The Athenaid* (1787), which are full of political allusions, Glover almost rivalled the father of epic poetry; but his best thing is the political ballad called *Admiral Hosier's Ghost* (1739).

MATTHEW GREEN (1696–1737), a clerk in the Customs, who had quietly admired nature all his life, became posthumously known by *The Spleen* (1737), a poem in octosyllables, to which his friend Glover contributed a preface. Green is a delightful poet, touching his subject in that spirit of compromise between the dying classicism and the coming romanticism which we see at its best in Collins. He was

a cheerful, contented bachelor, finding in his charming groves with their nymphs and dryads an admirable remedy for melancholy; and thus his poem has something of the gay, irresponsible idleness of a garden scene by Watteau.

AARON HILL (1685–1750) is best known through the conflict with Pope, on which he ventured after being satirised in *The Dunciad.* Seventeen plays are attributed to him, besides some other writings now altogether forgotten; and his one claim to remembrance is his part in the introduction of Thomson to the public. His style was correct and cold, fashioned on the model of the French classical writers.

RICHARD SAVAGE (d. 1743), to whose memory Johnson, his early companion in tribulation, paid a splendid and partial tribute, was a notoriously dissipated person, and advertised himself well by his claim to be the son of Lord Rivers and Lady Macclesfield. This was the subject of his first successful poem, *The Bastard* (1728). He had, however, been writing poems and comedies for more than ten years before. In 1729 a long descriptive poem, *The Wanderer*, and, in 1730, a set of *Verses on Viscountess Tyrconnel's Recovery*, complete the tale of any work of Savage's that can be called memorable. Johnson's special pleading and the interest which attaches itself to all dissipated poets have overcharged Savage's memory with importance; as a matter of fact, although he is allied to Thomson, he is by no means in the van of the battalion, but is a prominent skirmisher on its flanks. He is buried in St. Peter's churchyard at Bristol.

CHARLES WESLEY (1707–1788) was the poet of the movement whose apostle was his great brother, and wrote an enormous number of hymns and sacred lyrics. Although their subjective fervour and consequent want of restraint are serious literary drawbacks and involve temptations to bathos, many are very perfect and, while appealing to all classes alike, have a music and charm of their own. "Jesus, lover of my soul," will always be one of the most popular hymns in English—a spontaneous lyric, which goes straight to the heart and finds its echo in every generation. Moreover, these hymns emphasise the importance of the Evangelical movement on its less special side, as part and parcel of the contemporary revolution in manners, politics, and literature.

WILLIAM WHITEHEAD (1715–1785) was made Poet Laureate in 1757, when Cibber died, and after Gray had declined the office. He wrote seven dramas, of which the most important are *The Roman Father* (1750) and *Creüsa, Queen of Athens* (1754).

SIR CHARLES HANBURY WILLIAMS (1708–1759) was one of the chief satirists of George II's reign. Sir Robert Walpole was his chief patron and friend, and found his pen of no small use in the support of his own policy. Williams sat in Parliament for some years, and was afterwards sent on embassies to Berlin, Dresden, Vienna, and St. Petersburg. His poems, consisting for the most part of fugitive pieces, were imperfectly collected in 1822; but their coarse savagery has now lost its personal interest, as they refer almost entirely to the events of that age.

B.—FROM 1750 TO 1800.

CHRISTOPHER ANSTEY (1724–1805), author of the well-known *New Bath Guide* (1766), was the father of English *vers de société.* This series of fifteen letters in verse, making fun of the well-known *habitués* of Bath, was the most popular work of its day. The impression which it made may be seen from a letter of Horace Walpole to George Montague (June 20, 1766): "What pleasure have you to come! . . . It is called the *New Bath Guide.* It stole into the world, and for a fortnight no soul looked into it, concluding its name was its true name. No such thing. It is a set of letters in verse, in all kind of verses, describing the life at Bath, and incidentally everything else; but so much wit, so much humour, fun, and poetry, so much

originality, never met together before." Anstey wrote other poems which, however, attracted very little notice.

ANNA LETITIA BARBAULD (1743–1825) was the daughter of a Leicestershire schoolmaster named Aikin, and married Rochemont Barbauld, a Frenchman by extraction, who became a dissenting minister at Palgrave on the northern border of Suffolk. A little before her marriage she published a volume of *Miscellaneous Poems* (1773), and, soon after, *Hymns in Prose for Children.* Mr. Barbauld became minister of a chapel at Stoke Newington in 1802; and thus his wife was brought into nearer connection with the literary circles of the day. She wrote several other poems, containing here and there some true touches of poetic genius. Her style was simple, and she was not without imagination. Her best work is to be found in such pieces as *The Death of the Righteous.*

JAMES BEATTIE (1735–1803), a native of Kincardineshire, wrote several miscellaneous poems. His principal work, *The Minstrel* (1771–4), is merely fragmentary, and is written, like *The Castle of Indolence,* in the Spenserian stanza. In the seventies this form of romantic poetry was a little belated, and Beattie's contribution to it is not very brilliant.

THOMAS BLACKLOCK (1721–1791) lost his eyesight when only six months old, and is known as the blind poet. He was born at Annan, received a good education at home and in Edinburgh, became, in 1759, a Presbyterian preacher, wrote a treatise on blindness in the *Encyclopædia Britannica,* sermons, theological discourses, and several poems. His poetry is insipid and dull; but its correctness of description and its occasionally vivid appreciation of natural beauty are surprising in one who could not have remembered the little he had seen. Blacklock was able to distinguish colours by the touch. His poems were edited by Henry Mackenzie in 1793.

CHARLES CHURCHILL (1731–1764), the son of a clergyman, was educated at Westminster and entered at Trinity College, Cambridge, but kept no terms at the University, married at a ridiculously early age, took Orders, and succeeded his father as curate and lecturer of St. John's, Westminster. His carelessness and neglect of clerical propriety brought him into conflict with the Dean, and ended in his resignation of his preferments and retirement from his Orders. He gave himself up henceforward to political and personal satire, and was a great friend of Wilkes. Quarrels with his wife and habitual dissipation embittered his private life, and, utterly worn out, he died, when barely thirty-four, on a visit to Wilkes at Boulogne. His earliest work, *The Rosciad* (1761), in heroic couplets, was a satire on the contemporary stage and gained him a great reputation; for the time being he was hailed as the equal of Pope and Dryden. It is interesting to note that this appeared during the later years of his life. He wrote hastily and recklessly, with a great command of rugged rhythm and scurrilous invective; but he has been well called a "pamphleteer in verse," without any real claim to the poetical faculty. In 1763 he attacked the Scottish nation in *The Prophecy of Famine,* which, in Lord Stanhope's opinion, "may yet be read with all the admiration which the most vigorous powers of verse, and the most lively touches of wit, can earn in the cause of slander and falsehood." More unsparing even than this was his *Epistle* (1763) to Hogarth, who had caricatured Churchill as a bear wearing clerical costume and holding a pot of porter and a club, inscribed "Lies and North Britons," in his paw. The long *Ghost,* a dreary poem in the octosyllabic couplet of Hudibras, appeared in 1762–3, and contained a virulent satire on Johnson; it was succeeded by several other pieces, so that Churchill's work, although belonging to the last three years of his life, is rather voluminous. He sought immediate popularity and pay rather than anything more durable, and certainly gained a *succès de scandale* for the time being.

NATHANIEL COTTON (1705–1788) wrote miscellaneous poems. He was

a physician at St. Albans, and attended Cowper, who speaks of his "well-known humanity and sweetness of temper."

ROBERT DODSLEY (1703–1764) deserves mention as a great publisher and patron of literature. He projected *The Annual Register*, published a *Miscellany* of poems by several hands (1748), which was subsequently continued, and was himself the author of several plays and poems, including *Cleone* (1758). He had been a footman; but Pope, aware of his literary talent, assisted him to set up a business in Pall Mall with the loan of 100*l*. He was a constant friend of Johnson, and, indeed, proposed the scheme of the *Dictionary* to him. After his death his business was maintained by his brother, James Dodsley.

FRANCIS FAWKES (1720–1777) had a great reputation in his day as the translator of Anacreon and other Greek poets (1760), and published a volume of *Original Poems* (1761).

JAMES GRAINGER (1721?–1766) was born at Dunse in Berwickshire, joined the army as a surgeon, and afterwards went to the West Indies. He wrote an *Ode on Solitude* (1755) which found a place in Dodsley's *Miscellany*, and subsequently indulged in a half pastoral, half didactic poem, *The Sugar Cane* (1764). This production met with its fair share of mockery, and certainly deserved little else. Grainger, an excellent man, had no sense of humour, and fell into the most profound bathos without the least effort.

WILLIAM HAYLEY (1745–1820), the friend and biographer of Cowper (1800) and of Romney (1809), was educated at Eton and Trinity Hall, Cambridge. His poetical works, the bulk of which appeared in three volumes (1785), consist of *Triumphs of Temper*, *Triumphs of Music*, poetical epistles, odes, essays, and all manner of occasional compositions. To read Hayley in the present day is indeed a triumph of temper; but in his own time his insipid and unimaginative verse, the last gasp of the eighteenth century before Wordsworth, enjoyed considerable popularity.

JOHN HOME (1722–1808) wrote the well-known tragedy of *Douglas* (1756), which was received with great applause. It is now almost forgotten, with the exception of the famous passage beginning "My name is Norval." Home, like Robert Blair, was parish minister of Athelstaneford; but his connection with the stage gave the kirk elders such offence that he was obliged to resign his cure and retire to England, where, through Lord Bute's influence, he received a pension. In Sir Walter Scott's journal (April 25, 1827) there is this passage relating to Home's works: "They are, after all, poorer than I thought them. Good blank verse, and stately sentiment, but something lukewarmish, excepting *Douglas*, which is certainly a masterpiece. Even that does not stand the closet. The merits are for the stage; and it is certainly one of the best acting plays going." Posterity, however, has brought this kind-hearted criticism within still more narrow limits.

WILLIAM MASON (1724–1797) is chiefly known as the friend and biographer of Gray. He was a Yorkshireman, went to St. John's College, Cambridge, obtained a fellowship at Pembroke, and took Holy Orders. He became rector of Aston, near Rotherham, and eventually residentiary canon and precentor of York. He died at Aston. Mason's miscellaneous poetry is stilted and elaborately affected. In his *Odes on Independence*, *Memory*, etc. (1756), he affiliates himself to his friend Gray; but he is a sad weakling to have grown from that strong stem. In blank verse he wrote *The English Garden* (1772–82), and attempted satire in his *Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers, Knight* (1773). His dramas, *Elfrida* (1752) and *Caractacus* (1759), show an unswerving fidelity to classical tradition. They found a warm admirer in Boswell, who could see no difference in merit, as Johnson in worthlessness, between Gray and Mason. It is to Mason's *Life of Gray* (1774) that we owe the constructive idea of Boswell's great book, but the two biographies are comparable in no other way.

HANNAH MORE (1745–1833) was the daughter of Jacob More, a schoolmaster at Stapleton, two miles from Bristol, in the neighbourhood of which she lived all her life. She began to write for the stage, and published three or four plays. During one of her early visits to London she lived at Garrick's house and became a popular member of the Johnsonian circle and a rather obsequious flatterer of its centre. Her tragedy, *Percy* (1777), was produced by Garrick at Drury Lane, and was followed by another, *The Fatal Falsehood* (1779). But Miss More was deeply moved by the Evangelical revival, and devoted the rest of her life to moral and religious writing, beginning with *Sacred Dramas* (1782). Although she never broke her connection with the world, and went up to London from time to time, she passed most of her life at Clifton and in the quiet country houses of Cowslip Green and Barley Wood, and died at Clifton. She was a most indefatigable writer, and brought her sound common-sense to bear on all kinds of social, political, and ethical topics. Her monthly *Cheap Repository Tracts* (1795–8), written against Jacobins and Levellers, reached a million in circulation. Queen Charlotte consulted her on the education of the Princess Charlotte; and Miss More, in consequence, wrote *Hints towards forming the Character of a Young Princess* (1805). Her poetry is not very remarkable, but her prose could ill be spared. *Cœlebs in Search of a Wife* (1809) is not a great romance, but it is an admirable guide to its authoress' character—her high standard of morals and her command of ironical humour. In fact, Miss More, although no great writer, was a woman whom practical good sense and extraordinary piety combined to make a very powerful factor in the life of her day; all the great philanthropic movements, including the abolition of the slave trade, received her active support; and her advice was welcome, not to those only who were in harmony with her religious opinions, but to leading statesmen and men of letters.

ARTHUR MURPHY (1727–1805), a native of County Roscommon, was educated at St. Omer, gave up business for literature, published *The Gray's Inn Journal* from 1752 to 1754, went on the stage, wrote dramas, and took part in the great contest of parties; became a barrister, and died a commissioner of bankrupts. He translated Tacitus (1793), and published twenty-three plays, of which *The Grecian Daughter* (1772) and *What we must all come to* (1764), known subsequently as *Three Weeks after Marriage*, were the most popular. It was he who introduced Johnson to the Thrales; and of his plays the dictator of letters said: "I don't know that Arthur can be classed with the very first dramatic writers; yet at present I doubt much whether we have anything superior to Arthur."

HESTER LYNCH PIOZZI (1741–1822), *née* Salusbury, and, in her first marriage, Mrs. Thrale, was the constant hostess of Dr. Johnson, who is supposed to have assisted her in her poem, *The Three Warnings* (1766). After Mr. Thrale's death she married an Italian music-master named Piozzi and left England for some time. She wrote several other books, of which the best known is her *Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson* (1786). She spent the later portion of her life in Wales and at Bath, where she died. Her *Anecdotes* conveyed a rather false impression of Johnson, and were resented by the faithful Boswell.

ANNA SEWARD (1747–1809), the "Swan of Lichfield," was a fellow-townswoman of Johnson and Erasmus Darwin. Her father, a canon of Lichfield, who, in those days of non-resident bishops, lived in the Bishop's Palace, was an editor (1750) of Beaumont and Fletcher and has a niche in Dodsley's *Miscellany*. Miss Seward, a facile writer on such subjects as the death of Captain Cook, made some figure in her provincial circle. Her chief publications were a poetical novel called *Louisa* (1782) and *Sonnets* (1799). She bequeathed her poems for publication to Sir Walter Scott, but they are now utterly forgotten.

CHRISTOPHER SMART (1722–1771)

was born in Kent, went to school at Durham, and became a fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge, where he distinguished himself by mad freaks and was as lamentable a figure as Hartley Coleridge was afterwards at Oxford. In a more or less lucid interval between 1752 and 1763 he wrote a fair amount of verse. His *Poems* (1752) contained some odes in imitation of Gray, which were unmercifully treated by Dr. John Hill. Smart replied in a satire, *The Hilliad* (1753). In 1754 his secret marriage with the step-daughter of the publisher Newbery was discovered, and he was deprived of his fellowship. In 1763 he was placed in Bedlam, and there wrote his magnificent and unique *Song to David* (1763)—

> "A Song where flute-breath silvers trumpet clang,
> And stations you for once on either hand
> With Milton and with Keats"

—unlike anything he had written before, and quite the most interesting fragment which any minor poet of the eighteenth century has left. Smart, who also translated Horace (1756) into English prose, and Phædrus (1765) into English verse, eventually died in the King's Bench.

JOHN WOLCOT (1738–1819), better known as PETER PINDAR, was a doctor of medicine and divinity, and a scurrilous and unpoetic satirist. He ridiculed George III's weaknesses and oddities, attacked the Royal Academy with unrelenting pasquinades, and showed no mercy to Sir Joseph Banks and the Court poets. The boldness of his irregular burlesque style, his command of quaint images and illustrations, and the unblushing impudence of his lampoons, make his writings curious to the student, although their grossness has excluded them from the general reader. His knowledge and taste in painting were considerable; but the violence of his personalities and his frequent indecency render him a curious literary phenomenon rather than a name deserving of respect. Some of his humorous tales—*The Pilgrims and the Peas*, *The Razor Seller*, and the ludicrous amœbean strains of *Bozzy and Piozzi* (1786), in which he laughs at Johnson's rival biographers—exhibit his peculiar manner carried to its highest pitch of absurdity.

C.—MISCELLANEOUS.

(1) Among the translators of this age the chief is GILBERT WEST (1703–1756), who translated Pindar (1749) and wrote some original works. He was a friend and connection of Pitt and Lyttelton, and was appointed by Townshend one of the clerks of the Privy Council. He is now best known by his *Observations on the Resurrection* (1747). Lord Lyttelton addressed to him his Dissertation on the *Conversion of St. Paul*.

ELIZABETH CARTER (1717–1806) was one of the ladies who sat at Johnson's feet. Her translation of Epictetus was published in 1758. One of her original poems, the *Ode to Wisdom*, is introduced in *Clarissa Harlowe*.

(2) We have already mentioned several of the Scottish poets who came under obviously English influence. Of those who adhered more closely to their native form of lyric, the chief follow here. First, there are the authors of admirable songs and ballads, such as JOHN SKINNER (1721–1807), who wrote *Tullochgorum*; ISOBEL PAGAN (1740–1821), who is credited with *Ca' the yowes to the knowes*; and LADY ANNE BARNARD (1750–1825), the writer of *Auld Robin Gray* (1771).

ROBERT FERGUSSON (1750–1774) was born at Edinburgh, educated at St. Andrews, and died in a lunatic asylum after a somewhat melancholy career. His style and manner exercised no small influence upon Burns, whose "poetical progenitor" he is very justly accounted. He wrote his best poems in the Lowland vernacular, but also imitated the fashionable English modes of the day. He collected his fugitive poems in 1773.

ALEXANDER ROSS (1699–1784)

schoolmaster of Lochlee, published a Lowland pastoral tale called *The Fortunate Shepherdess* (1768), in which we see at once the influence of Allan Ramsay and catch sight of the coming glory of Burns. The title of the best edition (1866) is *Helenore*. His songs are written in the same transitional manner.

(3) Finally, some attention should be paid to three Scottish poets who, although writing in rather formal English, possessed a spirit of romance and a feeling for natural beauty which was denied to most of their contemporaries. The first of these, WILLIAM JULIUS MICKLE (1734–1788), was a native of Dumfriesshire, was first in business in Edinburgh, and afterwards, as a corrector to the Clarendon Press, lived and died near Oxford. His longest poem is *The Concubine* (1767); and he translated Camoens' *Lusiad* (1775). In Lowland Scotch he wrote an exquisite song, *The Mariner's Wife*; but his best known poem is the romantic ballad of *Cumnor Hall*, which gave Scott the idea for *Kenilworth*.

MICHAEL BRUCE (1746–1767) was born at Kinnesswood in Kinrosshire, and went to Edinburgh University, but died soon after leaving college. His chief works were *Lochleven* and *The Last Day*. In spite of immaturity of style and many borrowed passages, he showed great promise of genius. The honours of the lyric ballad, called *A Song to the Cuckoo*, are divided between him and JOHN LOGAN (1748–1788), who was his literary executor and published his poems in 1770. Logan himself, at first a Presbyterian minister and historical lecturer in Edinburgh, met with many disappointments in his literary ambition, and is said to have died of a broken heart. He wrote a tragedy called *Runnamede* (1783), contributed to several magazines, preached sermons which won him no small renown, and left a good deal of simple and pathetic poetry behind him.

CHAPTER XX.

SIR WALTER SCOTT AND THE ROMANTIC MOVEMENT IN FICTION.

§ 1. THOMAS PERCY. The *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry.* § 2. SIR WALTER SCOTT. Importance of his work. § 3. Life and character of Scott. § 4. General features of his poems. § 5. His poems in detail. §§ 6 and 7. The Waverley novels. § 8. Influence and critical faculty of Scott. § 9. The tale of terror: HORACE WALPOLE, MRS. RADCLIFFE, etc. § 10. Oriental novels: WILLIAM BECKFORD, etc. § 11. Historical romances: G. P. R. JAMES and W. H. AINSWORTH. § 12. The romance and the English novel. Exclusive importance of Scott in romance.

§ 1. THE great revolution in taste which drove out classical sentiment and substituted romance in its stead is due, above everything else, to the labours of Sir Walter Scott; and the chief source of Scott's romantic enthusiasm is to be found in the work of THOMAS PERCY. Percy—the name seems to have been spelt Piercy, and his claims to relationship with the house of Percy to have been rather uncertain—was the son of a grocer at Bridgnorth; and it is possible that his charming native place may have had a strong romantic attraction for him. He was educated at Bridgnorth grammar school and at Christ Church, Oxford, and having taken Holy Orders, was presented to the college living of Easton Maudit, between Northampton and Wellingborough, which he held, with other appointments, for twenty-nine years. He spent his time here in studying romantic literature, and published some translations from the Chinese, or rather from Portuguese versions of Chinese books. Johnson visited him in 1764 and spent much of his time in reading the old romance of *Felismarte of Hyrcania*, which he found in the rector's library. In the next year (1765) Percy published his first edition of the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*. The origin of this book, whose influence on Scott was epoch-making, was composite; the compiler was assisted by contemporary poets; and the help of Gray, that most scholarly of students, must have been invaluable. But the principal ingredient of his work came from a folio manuscript of the age of Charles I, which the servants

THOMAS PERCY (1729–1811).

The "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry" (1765).

of one of his friends had appropriated to light the fire; this manuscript, which he rescued and bound, is now in the British Museum. As a matter of fact Percy troubled himself very little about the ancient texts and their obsolete words and spelling; his great aim was to popularise ballad literature, and, possessing a very creditable faculty of imitation, he filled up the fragmentary and imperfect parts of the poems with matter of his own invention. The most valuable part of the collection was that which contained the famous Border ballads, *Chevy Chase* and *The Battle of Otterbourne*. But Percy did not confine himself to medieval poetry. The book is, in fact, an anthology of English songs and lyrics from the earliest time, and includes some of the best work of the Elizabethan writers and of Percy's own contemporaries. Percy very wisely allowed the poems which he had edited with such pains to speak for themselves; and his critical remarks, apart from the explanatory notes, are confined to two short dissertations, one on the ancient minstrels and the other on early metrical romances. The collection was dedicated to the Duchess of Northumberland, in whose husband's household Percy was chaplain. Whether his relationship with the historic Percys was real or fictitious, he at all events found the chief bearer of their name a useful patron. In 1778 he was made Dean of Carlisle, and in 1782 he was promoted to the bishopric of Dromore, where he died twenty-nine years later.

Influence of the "Reliques" upon Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832).

§ 2. It was this book of Percy's which, as has been said, kindled the genius of Sir Walter Scott. It may be said once and for all that the critical estimate of Scott's work has suffered considerable fluctuation, and that in a generation which is keenly sensitive to any short-coming in style, the splendid merits of his romances and, in a less degree, of his poems, are frequently forgotten. He was one of those writers who never trouble their heads about style, even on the elementary side of correct grammar. In so voracious a reader and so sympathetic a critic this is a remarkable defect; one would have thought that so assiduous a course of reading, even when it lay among the tortuous periods of Elizabethan prose, should have produced not only a personal attention to the ordinary decencies of English, but a desire to give his own writing some individual flavour of style. But Scott is the standing exception to the common run of authors; he is the one instance in which a supreme gift of imagination and an abnormal sense of the picturesque overshadow those faults which would be the ruin of the ordinary mediocrity. Scott's genius was as splendid as it was versatile; whatever it touched became pure gold or, at the worst, silver-gilt. The complete body of his work, romantic, poetical, historical, and critical, is immense; there is scarcely a passage in it which is not coloured by his imagination; even where it is most perfunctory he shows an interest in his subject and communicates it to his reader.

It is just this quality which marks his unique position in English literature. In the first place he is the great original of that return to nature which is the dominant note of nineteenth-century literature. To say this is not to discover his immediate influence on succeeding writers. His influence upon literature pure and simple was not wide. He is the unapproachable monarch of romance; and the scanty band of authors who, since his day, have entered that perilous realm have followed him at a distance, while some of its members have chosen to tread in the extravagant footsteps of the more imitable Dumas. But he appealed to popular appreciation; he found, in the great days of his success, a whole continent of readers whose taste he trained, by his own easy and palatable methods, to recognise in the whole literature of the romantic movement something that it could not have grasped without his aid; he pointed out to everybody the new road in public opinion. We have seen that not one of the eighteenth-century poets who broke, however feebly, from the traditions of the post-Restoration school, could have effected this revolution; even had Johnson's dictatorship been wholeheartedly on their side, their movement would not have affected the taste of the whole nation; it would have confined itself to a small and cultivated circle. In Scott's own day, and even among his own friends, the poetry of the Lake school, and of Shelley and Keats, was regarded as the work of an eccentric clique. It was only through the medium of Scott, through the avenue which he opened up to further vistas, that the English public found their way to an appreciation of that fuller landscape whose range increased as the century advanced; it was his hand which opened the gate of this boundless demesne to the last straggler who wandered in the trim parterres of eighteenth-century writing.

Scott's place in the intellectual history of his time: popular character of his work.

In the second place, Scott and the romantic movement are almost synonymous terms. For the great majority of Englishmen he re-created the Middle Ages and gave history a living interest; he prepared the way for the free circulation of that spirit which, from the beginning to the end of the nineteenth century, has connected the present more and more closely with the past. It is true that Scott's medievalism was not always the real thing, that it had a certain crudity and shallowness of detail, and that its ornament was too often of plaster. His art in this respect was identical with that of the architects who, in his own age, were building faint and inadequate imitations of Gothic churches—men who desired to do their best and yet were not sufficiently emancipated from pseudo-classical forms to see their models clearly. Just as their art was no great advance on Strawberry Hill, so Scott now and then perilously recalls the sham medievalism of *The Castle of Otranto*. He was to all intents

Scott's dominant medievalism.

and purposes the first worker in an unknown field. No one hitherto had attempted to give anything like a connected picture of the age of chivalry. *Ivanhoe*, *The Talisman*, *Marmion*, were novel experiments. And it is certain that, to the modern reader who is not deeply concerned with minutiæ of correct detail, these crowded pictures of bygone days give exactly the same pleasure, the same sense of reality, which they gave to Scott's immediate public. Even the highly critical reader whose appreciations are trained to an intimate familiarity with medieval life and art is bound to confess that, beneath the meretricious surface of much that Scott wrote, there is a real vitality which is wanting in the more scrupulously considered works of later years. In short, by the general favour shown to these poems and novels, by the recognition of a spark in them that quickened and revived an apparently dead mechanism, the English mind was gradually but thoroughly prepared for the most important movements, religious, social, political, and artistic, of the years that followed. With Scott nineteenth-century literature may be said to open; the curiosity which in time made every Englishman a reader begins with him.

His life.

§ 3. He was born on August 15, 1771, in Edinburgh, his "own romantic town." His father, whose portrait he afterwards drew in *Redgauntlet*, was a Writer to the Signet and came of the Border family of Scott of Harden; his mother was a Rutherford; and thus on both sides he could claim Border ancestry. An illness in childhood left him with a slight lameness, which long after became a serious trouble. Owing to his weakness he was sent to stay with his grandfather near Kelso, in the midst of that picturesque and legendary country which he was to make so peculiarly his own. At the Edinburgh High School and University he showed no great promise, but was popular and a good sportsman. However, he was even then a devourer of miscellaneous books, his taste leading him to prefer poetry and fiction. Novels and romances were not very common then, as we know; and Scott fed himself chiefly on the picturesque romances of medieval chivalry. On leaving the University he prepared to go to the bar and practised as an advocate in Edinburgh; his real vocation was, however, very different; and his legal experience did little more than furnish him with hints of incidents and traits of human nature which he afterwards worked up in his romances. While still in his teens he fell in love with Miss Williamina Belsches, who disappointed him in 1797 by marrying Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo. The memory of this attachment seems never to have forsaken him altogether, although at the end of the same year he married a Miss Charlotte Carpenter. This young lady was of French extraction. The marriage took place at Carlisle on a Christmas Eve; and the young couple went to live at Lasswade, a pleasant village near Edinburgh. They also took lodgings in Edinburgh itself, where they eventually went into a house,

first No. 10, then No. 39, Castle Street. Just about this time the German romantic movement was making itself felt in other countries. Bürger's *Lenore*, which had appeared in 1774, and Goethe's early dramas and ballads, set light to a fire that had been kindling for many years. Among other places, Edinburgh was touched by the novelty; and Scott, who hitherto had confined his interest to the antiquities of the Border, felt the enthusiasm. The immediate result was a translation, or rather imitation, of *Lenore* and other German pieces (1796). After his marriage he brought out a translation of *Götz von Berlichingen* (1799). Meanwhile, the idea of collecting the Border ballads never left him. These traditional songs still existed in an oral form among the descendants of the Liddesdale and Annandale moss-troopers; and Scott, like Macpherson in search of his Highland Ossian, but with a greater honesty, travelled all over the Lowlands, accumulating material and gaining familiarity with the country. He filled himself with its strange traditions until he became wedded, as it were, to every foot of land in the district. How close this alliance was may be seen in the ballads called *Glenfinlas* and *The Eve of St. John*, which he contributed, with two German translations, to "Monk" Lewis' *Tales of Wonder* (1801).

Early publications.

In 1800 Scott became Sheriff-depute of Selkirkshire, and was able to live without depending entirely on the law. Not long after, in 1802, he published, through James Ballantyne, a friend of his boyhood, the first two volumes of *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*. This collection, the fruit of his travels, was simply a magnificent tribute to the example of Percy. As an editor, Scott did all that could have been done, and in his notes and illustrations, in which he incorporated a great amount of subsidiary matter, he showed early promise of his skill in narrative. In 1804 he published, with a commentary, the old romance of *Sir Tristram*, of which a unique copy existed in the Advocates' Library. He mistakenly attributed this to that mysterious person, Thomas the Rhymer, whose prophecies had been regarded with awe and reverence from the thirteenth century downwards. In 1804 also Scott moved from Lasswade to a house at Ashestiel on the Tweed. By this time he had determined to give up the law for literature. The solicitors, on his own confession, did not do him "less than justice by regarding others among my contemporaries as fitter to discharge the duty due to their clients than a young man who was taken up with running after ballads, whether Teutonic or national. My profession and I, therefore, came to stand nearly upon the footing which honest Slender consoled himself on having established with Mistress Anne Page: 'There was no great love between us at the beginning, and it pleased Heaven to decrease it on farther

"The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border" (1802–3), *etc.*

acquaintance.' I became sensible that the time was come when I must either buckle myself resolutely to the 'toil by day, the lamp by night,' renouncing all the Delilahs of my imagination, or bid adieu to the profession of the law, and hold another course."

The first fruits of his new profession were a rapid series of romantic poems—*The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805), *Marmion* (1808), *The Lady of the Lake* (1810), *Rokeby* (1812), and *The Lord of the Isles* (1815). Less important than these are the two poems on Napoleon's fall, *The Vision of Don Roderick* (1811) and the dull *Field of Waterloo* (1815), and the two minor romantic poems, *The Bridal of Triermain* (1813) and *Harold the Dauntless* (1817), which were published anonymously. These extraordinary poems, each perfectly original in its subject and manner, each written in a fluent metre full of a new vitality, changed the public taste in a most miraculous way. In the ten years between *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* and Scott's adieu to poetry, the way of the romantic movement and all its activities was made smooth. Meantime, the poems did not represent Scott's whole energy. In these years began that course of indefatigable work which was forced upon him by his ambitions and his consequent anxieties. He had a passionate desire to found a family and become a county magnate—not in the least from any motive which we should call "snobbish," but simply because the idea was part and parcel of his romantic dreams, his longing after feudal ideals. In 1811 he bought, with this view, a small farmhouse on the Tweed, which he renamed Abbotsford, and on removing there in 1812 he went on purchasing land, planting and improving, and transforming the cottage "into a sort of dream of a mansion-house, whimsical in the exterior, but convenient within." This, added to the expenses of his house in Edinburgh, implied a constant pecuniary burden, whose weight grew on him the longer he lived. His hospitality at Abbotsford was princely. He received every traveller of distinction, and did "the honours of all Scotland" to those whom his genius attracted in crowds. His income during these earlier years of his writing was augmented by his admirable edition of Dryden (1808) and an edition of Swift (1814), both of which contained biographies; and, all through his life, he was occupied with supplementary work of a similar kind. By the time of *The Lord of the Isles* his poetical vein was fairly exhausted; and he confesses in his 1830 preface to *Rokeby*, which contains the account of his removal to Abbotsford, that, after *Marmion* and *The Lady of the Lake*, there was a decline in public interest. Byron had appeared in the same field of narrative poetry. The style to which Scott clung was becoming monotonous, and his choice of subject in *Rokeby* was not a success. It is certainly true

Publication of his poems (1805–17).

Scott at Abbotsford.

that, although *The Lord of the Isles*, hastily written, and not very well received, has found many admirers since its publication, few people have subscribed warmly to the merits of *Rokeby*. At all events *Rokeby* proved the turning-point; *The Lord of the Isles* bore its further testimony; and Scott, fully aware of the decline in his popularity, and attributing it to its just causes, abandoned poetry and entered on a new career in which no Byron could hope to overshadow his genius, nor could any monotony weary his readers.

In 1814 appeared *Waverley*, which had been sketched out and thrown aside nine years before; and with *Waverley* began a noble series of romances, pouring forth in a continuous stream from 1814 to 1832—a library of unsurpassed fiction. The causes which had been so active in the hasty production of the poems had a similar influence on the novels. Literary industry has nothing more phenomenal to show than this record of over thirty stories in seventeen years, and, to supplement them, books like the *Life of Napoleon*. Scott, in fact, sacrificed both his life and, there is no reason to doubt, his style, in the heroic struggle to meet his expenses. The amount of work which he accomplished was prodigious. In 1822 and 1823, for example, he wrote *Peveril of the Peak*, *Quentin Durward*, and *Saint Ronan's Well* within twelve months. In 1820, the year of *The Monastery* and *The Abbot*, he was made a baronet. However, up to this time he had maintained his anonymity as a novelist; and, although the books were ascribed to him as the only man who could have written them, he kept the mystery up for some years longer. It was difficult for his familiar friends who visited him at Abbotsford to understand how this hospitable country gentleman and sportsman, with his time always at his friends' disposal, could have found leisure for the merely physical part of his labour; but he had been at work long before his guests were out of bed in the morning, and so was able to entertain them for the rest of the day with a good conscience. The novels "by the author of *Waverley*" were published by the Edinburgh firm of Constable, and printed by Scott's friends the Ballantynes. He had very unwisely entered into a secret partnership in the printing firm. While everything went well his novels were the mainstay of his publishers and printers; but Constable became involved in the commercial crisis of 1825 and 1826, and ruined with himself the Ballantynes and Scott. Scott found himself face to face with gigantic liabilities; he might have escaped by taking advantage of the bankrupt law; but his sense of honour was so high and delicate that he only asked for time, and resolutely set himself to clear off, by unremitting toil, the vast debt of nearly £120,000. Although the weariness of the struggle told upon his pen; and although, in his later books, produced under this accumulation of anxiety and distress, we see less of

Publication of the Waverley novels (1814–32).

Misfortunes of 1825–6, and end of Scott's life.

his sublime gift of high spirits than in the wonderful novels of his prime, and recognise more that is definitely melancholy, his imagination, nevertheless, survived, and never, save in *Castle Dangerous*, lost its freshness. In addition, the *Life of Napoleon* (1827), not a great historical work, perhaps, but a very admirable narrative, the *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft* (1830), and the vivid history of Scotland contained in the *Tales of a Grandfather* (1828–30), belong to these closing years. But, towards the year 1830, his brain, exhausted by incessant toil, began to show symptoms of hopeless weakness. A stroke of paralysis affected his memory so much that, although he still continued to labour as eagerly as before, he sometimes forgot the beginning of the phrase he was dictating. He was sent abroad to Italy and the Mediterranean in the vain hope of improvement, but returned home to die. He lingered for a short time in a state of unconsciousness, and died, on the 21st of September, 1832, at Abbotsford, on the estate which his exertions had freed from debt and restored to his posterity. "It was so quiet a day," wrote Lockhart, "that the sound he best loved, the gentle ripple of the Tweed over its pebbles, was distinctly audible as we knelt round the bed and his eldest son kissed and closed his eyes."

Character of Scott.

To speak of Scott's character is simply to praise. In every department of life he showed the manly and robust spirit which informs all his novels and poetry. His generosity and hospitality gained him a multitude of friends, and through all his career he found no enemies apart from the critics who condemned his poetry in *The Edinburgh Review*. He was the delight of society. His conversation, without the slightest touch of self-conceit, was full of picturesque reminiscence and old stories; and there never was a man so entirely free from literary pettiness and affectation. As might have been expected, he was an uncompromising Tory and staunch Episcopalian; yet he was free from narrow prejudice, and, in his politics and his manly God-fearing creed, was an example to his own age and to all others. This gallant and chivalrous gentleman was as simple and tender-hearted as a child, and loved little children; his love for Marjorie Fleming has been immortalised by another and not dissimilar Scotsman, Dr. John Brown. But the essence of Scott's character lies in the pathetic story of his later life, when this great man, already past his fiftieth year, with a body of work behind him that would have sufficed for two ordinary lifetimes, and with all his cherished dreams shattered and irrecoverable for his own enjoyment, shut himself up in a small Edinburgh house to retrieve the losses for which he was innocently responsible, and to maintain his honour, not so much for his own sake as for the credit and future welfare of his family. Modern criticism, with its exclusive regard for style, has been rather unjust to Scott, and has seen in him an obsolete novelist with a limited

power of expression. He was, as we have said, and as he himself acknowledged, an imperfect writer; but that the man who in happier days had written *Guy Mannering* and *Ivanhoe*, should have been able, amid his misfortunes, to write *The Talisman*, *Woodstock*, and *Anne of Geierstein*, is a simple proof of the fact that Scott was, and is likely to remain, the greatest of romantic novelists, and one of that small band of Titans who, with diverse claims and for totally distinct reasons, cluster round the central figure of Shakespeare.

§ 4. Scott's poetry was more epoch-making than even his prose. When that wonderful series of romantic novels rose on the horizon, the poems, each a novel in verse, had prepared the world for the phenomenon. Then, as now, they drew the attention of the uncritical reader, who was fascinated by the hasty succession of events, the swift progress of the bustling plot, and the eloquence of the verse. Scott was, in fact, a nineteenth-century Trouvére, an inventor of romances tuning his song to the popular ear. There can be no doubt that the metre of his poems had a great deal to do with their success; their story, set in another frame, would have provoked less interest. This metre, suggested by the octosyllabic couplets of the Norman-French romances, and modified by the metre of Coleridge's *Christabel*, which had been introduced to Scott by his friend, Sir John Stoddart, was the fitting form for a romantic poem which depended largely upon the character of its plot. The risk of monotony was avoided by occasional metrical irregularities and the introduction of short lines, which broke up and formed pauses in the scansion without hindering the melody. It is impossible to read Scott's poetry without noticing the musical ease with which every verse runs. This Gothic form of verse is simply the refinement of the old ballad-poetry. Scott, who had lived for years in an atmosphere of ballads and metrical romances, caught their tone and spirit, and added to them just that amount of art and regular construction which put them on the safe side of tediousness. His poetical romances interest us because he contrived to give them an attractive form, and was not merely content with antiquarian imitations. But the greatness of his poetry consists in the fact that it is the best of a limited kind; there may be isolated ballads in Percy or the *Border Minstrelsy* which are more vigorous, and go with a better swing than anything of Scott's, but to find anything like the sustained life and motion of *Marmion* in the older poetry would be very hard. This is Scott's position as regards the early minstrels, on whose jagged rhymes he founded his smoother art. His relation to his contemporaries is utterly different. His command of melody did not include a command of phrase. His imagination gave him the faculty of simple description, which, caught and borne along in a flood of impetuous rhyme, readily struck the listening ear with its surprising

His poems: their ballad character.

His relation to contemporary poets.

vividness of effect. However, where his phrases have magic, the result, in nine cases out of ten, is due to his affection for the romantic place-names of Scotland and the Border, and the ease with which he introduced them into his verse. Otherwise, he had no conception of anything save his story and the necessity of a picturesque surface; that delicate sense of nature in its kinship to man, which is the true source of imaginative phrase, was denied to him. When Scott turned to nature by herself he was frankly eighteenth-century; his meditations on the field of Waterloo are in the vein of Thomson. To a certain extent he was under the influence of Burns; he certainly forms the channel through which Burns joins the great stream of English poetry. Yet he lacks precisely those qualities which place Burns among the great poets. Even his gift of melody becomes a fatal facility. It is very seldom that he shows that indifference to prosody which mars almost all Byron's work and a great deal of Shelley's; his music is easy and voluble, and sometimes almost machine-made, but it never rises to Shelley's great heights of lyric frenzy or Byron's constant inspiration. The fact is that Scott's temper remains outside this range of comparison, that he worked in a style utterly different from that of his contemporaries, and therefore is hardly to be judged with them. He was indebted to Coleridge; he found himself, to his own disadvantage, Byron's creditor; but the balance-sheet in each case was a matter of general forms. In the spiritual ancestry of Scott and Byron the poets from whom they borrowed these external hints have no part. But, because Scott's poetry fails when tried by an uncongenial test, we must not therefore pronounce it second or third-rate. There are few writers who demand scrupulous fairness so much as Scott. When we turn to the occasional songs scattered about his poems and novels, we recognise a gift which, if it awakes a less general sympathy than the genius of Burns' songs, is, at all events, very singular and wonderful. Once or twice, as in the marvellous *Dies Iræ* which closes *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, he reaches a very high pitch of lyric eloquence; but the chief beauty of these songs is in their penetrating fragrance, in the echo which they leave in the memory. Such poems as *Rosabelle*, *Young Lochinvar*, the dirge in *Marmion*, the boat-song in *The Lady of the Lake*, or the song of *County Guy* in *Quentin Durward*, are cases in point.

§ 5. Turning from these general details to particular poems, one may remark that the most popular of all is the ultra-romantic *Lady of the Lake*. In his first three poems Scott chose the sixteenth century as his historical period, and wove historical details into a framework of romance. *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* is a story of the Borders, full of vivid action and liberally studded with songs; the plot is not very remarkable for coherence or probability; and the central point of interest in the poem is

"The Lay of the Last Minstrel" (1805).

the visit of Deloraine to Melrose and the tomb of the famous Schoolman and reputed magician, Michael Scot. It is characteristic of Scott's wanton contempt for historical accuracy that he placed Michael Scot's death two centuries later than the actual event; a similar use of romantic licence makes the detail of his novels untrustworthy. In *Marmion* the fictitious fortunes of the hero (who is another historical anachronism) are led to a climax in the battle of Flodden (1511). *Marmion* is altogether an advance on its predecessor; from the romantic point of view it is an admirably connected story, and, in fervour of description, the final canto is positively Homeric. Again the scene is laid on Tweedside, although there are numerous digressions, and the story is interrupted by two long tales which are quite in the irrelevant manner of the old minstrels. *Marmion* is the worthy precursor of *Ivanhoe* and *The Talisman*.

"Marmion" (1808).

However, in *Marmion*, with its rapid changes of scene, Scott formed no link between himself and his readers quite so strong as the description of Melrose in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*. His love for the mere geography of Scotland was such that we read his poetry with something of the desire for information which is the *raison d'être* of popular guide-books. *The Lady of the Lake*, which has not so much concentrated energy as *Marmion*, supplies this need; and no visitor to Loch Katrine or the Trossachs is complete without a copy. It represents a more ambitious attempt than either of its predecessors. The story brought into contact the chivalrous Court of James V and the barbarous Highlanders of Roderick Dhu; it demanded more local colour and more imagination than either of its predecessors; it took Scott from his own especial domain to the shadowy borders of the Ossianic region. But for Scott the atmosphere of romance was enough, and minor details of scenery mattered little. *The Lady of the Lake*, with its brilliant *dramatis personæ*, the disguised king, the Highland chief, and Ellen Douglas, is to *Marmion* as *Rob Roy* is to *Ivanhoe*; the loosely knit, garrulous story of the minstrel becomes a chivalrous epic. One may pass over *Rokeby*, in spite of its fine songs and its noble tribute to the scenery of Yorkshire. The period of the Civil War was not altogether congenial to Scott's feudal prepossessions; and even in *Woodstock*, many years later, he failed to do it complete justice. In *Rokeby* he was handling it for the first time, and gave it too much of the feudal colour; the result is, consequently, a little unreal. His next poem, *The Lord of the Isles*, went back to an age which he had not yet attempted to describe, and to the wild scenery of the Western Highlands; the centre of the romance is Bruce, and its climax the battle of Bannockburn. Bruce had already made his *début* in romantic circles with Miss Jane Porter as his sponsor; and, had *The Lord*

"The Lady of the Lake" (1810).

"Rokeby" (1812).

"The Lord of the Isles" (1815).

of the Isles been the first of Scott's romantic poems instead of the last, it would have created a great excitement. It is quite as good as *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*; the description of Bannockburn is only just inferior to the picture of Flodden in *Marmion*; the barren precipices and thundering seas of the Hebrides are as vivid as the mountain-slopes and wooded shores in *The Lady of the Lake*.

Minor poems, etc.

The ultimate conclusion, if we take these poems one by one, is that one is as good as another. They all run with the same even smoothness; the great difference between them is that their plots are not equally well managed, that in *Marmion* we have a first-rate story, while in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* we are oppressed by a sense of incoherency. While Scott's way of telling a story in verse is not in itself monotonous, it may be carried too far in five successive attempts. This is what Scott and his first readers felt; it is what his readers still feel. When the method was pursued in smaller poems the result was simply mediocrity. Very few people read to-day the mixed metres of *Harold the Dauntless*, or feel much attraction to the false Gothicism of *The Bridal of Triermain* with its pleasant burlesque of mystery. In *The Vision of Don Roderick*, where he embroidered a Napoleonic prophecy upon a really romantic legend, and in *The Field of Waterloo*, where he deserted feudalism to moralise on the vanity of human wishes, he was utterly out of his element. There is always something of relief in turning from these casual and half-hearted strains to the deep notes of the shorter songs and even to the phantom terrors of the early ballads.

The Waverley novels.

§ 6. The date at which the poems appeared and the revolution which they created in consequence are an immense addition to their real importance. But the crowning glory of Scott's work is the splendid series of novels to which the poems are the appropriate overture. The general character of these romances is historical; even where the plot is entirely concerned with the doings of fictitious people, the story is referred to a certain period and is closely connected with the history of the time. Scott's method is the typical method of romance. He is absorbed in his story, in the adventures and fortunes of his heroes and heroines. He misses no picturesque detail; he works up, as we say, his local colour; he arranges with consummate skill dramatic situations to which he leads up unerringly. We are caught in the strong tide of the story; we demand a succession of incidents, an unflagging devotion to adventure. The consequence is that his characters, although in such surroundings they could not but live strenuously, are always seen from the outside; their virtues and vices are elementary, and are ruled by no principle of minute analysis. In this objective method of writing there are no shades and distinctions of passion; each character is drawn in forcible outline and is

Objective method of Scott's fiction.

never filled in with every attribute of life ; it lives on account of the story, and the interest of the story does not depend on it. Scott created characters in plenty ; he drew admirable heroes and admirable villains, gallant men and beautiful women ; he dressed them all in the costume of their period and made them a part of its scenery. But they all live in a world of their own. Their *beaux traits* and their crimes, their frequent combination of both, belong to romance ; their organisation is simple. Where good and evil meet in the same man, they exist separately as two opposite impulses and never coalesce with the complexity of motive which we see in real life. Where Scott's characters are virtuous they are ideal, even in their weakness and mistaken policy ; where they are irretrievably vicious their badness is undiluted. Every novelist, whatever be his method, puts something of himself into his work ; and it is usually the case that the romantic writer is a person of great simplicity of character. Dumas, whose passions and appetites were strong and knew no delicate graduations, created heroes whose manner of life is a delightful and gigantic outrage on probability. Scott, living in a world of dreams, with the best and most human instincts developed in him to an abnormal degree, was incapable of pursuing his characters through phase after phase, of anatomising them, and noting their perplexities of structure. The vitality of their creator's genius gives them life, but a life which is emphatically exceptional and in multiplied instances impossible. However, if the student of human character gains but few pertinent hints from the Waverley novels, he has the advantage of an acquaintance with a world of people in which fiction has scored a triumph over fact. There is not one of Scott's more prominent characters in whom fiction has not received an additional boon. Of the plots in which they circulate there is little to be said. Scott's tales work themselves out with a narrative facility ; they were written with no great attention to coherence ; yet, although they constantly lead us into digressions from the thread of the story, their intricacy is never overwhelming. Some of the novels—*Peveril of the Peak*, for example—leave the reader with a strong impression of dislocation ; certain episodes detach themselves like separate novels from their context. In any case, each romance is a string of connected episodes which observe no strict canon of proportion, but occupy a larger or smaller space as the writer's fancy moves him. This would be out of place in a novel of ordinary life, where the scene changes little and the attention is concentrated upon the plot, but amid the hurry and adventure of romance, with its continually changing panorama, so careless a method of construction has obviously fewer faults. And Scott's boundless imagination, the intense reality which he found in his own stories, his temporary forgetfulness of himself in his heroes, atone for every superficial defect that these romances present.

Plots of the novels.

§ 7. In *Waverley* (1814) Scott showed a desire to imitate Fielding; in its wandering life, in its out-of-door atmosphere, in almost everything but its historical framework, the story recalls the leading features of *Tom Jones*. The selected period was the rebellion of 1745, the most romantic epoch in later Scottish history, and the interest of the story is naturally brought to bear upon the figure of Charles Edward Stewart. The vivid reality of the tale and the absorbing interest of its plot appealed to every class of reader. As an imitation of Fielding, it followed worthily in the footsteps of an author who was justly celebrated as the greatest of English novelists, and it is obvious that those who were shocked by Fielding's robust indelicacy would feel very differently towards *Waverley*. It therefore opened a new era of romance, and, more than any other book before or after, gave prose fiction its proper place in literature. Even now, when so many good novels have been added to the list, *Waverley* is the best introduction to fiction. In the Baron Bradwardine and his household, Scott, using a method which would have been of no avail in less daring hands, painted the first set of splendid portraits with which his gallery is filled. *"Waverley"* (1814).

In *Guy Mannering* (1815) and *The Antiquary* (1816) we have two romances which show no abatement of the power displayed in *Waverley*. The historical element in both is merely a matter of local colour; the stories themselves are entirely imaginary and deal with Scottish private life. *Guy Mannering*, of the series of novels, is perhaps the most fascinating; its element of the supernatural is cautiously introduced and increases the charm of the story without risking the danger of absurdity. *The Antiquary*, less popular than many of the series, must always be a favourite book with those who appreciate the purely Scottish side of Scott's genius. In general form it approaches the modern novel more nearly than the romantic type of fiction, and was the first of that small section of Scott's tales which includes *St. Ronan's Well* and *The Surgeon's Daughter*. In Monkbarns, the Antiquary himself, Scott achieved for the first time a substantial hero, who is a welcome contrast to the lifeless virtues of Waverley or Guy Mannering. Of the lesser characters in *Guy Mannering*, however, there is almost a plethora. Meg Merrilies, Dominie Sampson, Dandie Dinmont, Dirk Hatteraick, and Glossin belong, not to a single novel, but to the world of fiction. Against these *The Antiquary* has no such crowded *dramatis personæ* to set; but Scott's humour discovers itself in the "gaberlunzie man," Edie Ochiltree. *"Guy Mannering"* (1815), *"The Antiquary"* (1816).

In December, 1816, the first series of *Tales of my Landlord* appeared, containing *The Black Dwarf*, a fanciful legend, and *Old Mortality*, a fine historical novel of the Covenanting period, beginning immediately after the murder of Archbishop Sharp. Scott attributed these tales to a fictitious schoolmaster, Peter

Pattieson, who left the manuscript with a supposed innkeeper; but, beyond the charming preface to the series, there is no intrusion of the imaginary author. *The Black Dwarf* is seriously inferior to its great predecessors; and the last scene, in which the dwarf throws off his veil of mystery and discloses himself as Sir Edward Mauley, is more worthy of Horace Walpole or Mrs. Radcliffe than of Scott. *Old Mortality*, however, is a complete and vast historical picture, depending upon a perfect and intimate knowledge of a very confusing period. It represents a gigantic attempt; and the result is perhaps the most perfect masterpiece in the great gallery of the Waverley novels. The contrasted portraits of Claverhouse and the fierce Covenanter Burley are the soul of the novel; but there is a whole crowd of subordinate characters, including Sergeant Bothwell, Major Morton, the old lady of Tillietudlem, and the admirably humorous Mause Headrigg, who supplies the chief amusement of the piece. This various drama was succeeded by the novel of *Rob Roy* (1818), half historical and half romantic. So far as Rob Roy himself goes, the story reminds us of Roderick Dhu and *The Lady of the Lake*; but the first place in the scheme belongs to Diana Vernon, the first of Scott's great heroines. The eccentric element which Scott always brought into his novels is more than usually well represented by Bailie Jarvie.

"Old Mortality" (1816), *"Rob Roy"* (1818), *etc.*

In 1818 Scott went back to *Tales of my Landlord* with *The Heart of Midlothian*, the novel in which, for the first and last time, he successfully attacked the deeper passions. This immeasurably pathetic story, a masterpiece beside, if not above *Guy Mannering*, springs from an historical episode, the burning of the Edinburgh Tolbooth in the Porteous riots. The mainspring of the plot is the devotion of Jeanie Deans to her unfortunate sister, culminating in the famous journey to London, in which, like a hero of Fielding, she takes to the road and passes through the adventures of travel. This story again has, like *The Antiquary*, the modern note, and is therefore one of the most imperishable of the series. The pathos of *The Heart of Midlothian* was strongly emphasised in *The Bride of Lammermoor*, which, with *A Legend of Montrose*, formed (1819) the third series of *Tales of my Landlord*. *The Bride of Lammermoor* is an unrelieved tragedy, working with the fatalistic mechanism of a Greek play; but its drawback is the almost unavoidable tendency to the incurable sentimentalism of the age, and it suffers from a superfluity of tears and mourning. Its reputation, however, was almost as European as the reputation of *Clarissa*; and Lucy, Ravenswood, and Caleb Balderstone are probably in our own day the three types of Scott's characters who are remembered by foreign readers. The faults of the novel were faithfully reproduced by Donizetti in his once famous opera, *Lucia di Lammermoor*. On the other hand, *A Legend of*

Second and third series of "Tales of my Landlord": "Heart of Midlothian," etc. (1818–19).

Montrose, not otherwise a great book, contained the splendid portrait of Dugald Dalgetty, the first of those characters in whom Scott, as thorough a student of Elizabethan and Jacobean literature as Charles Lamb, copied the humours of the eccentrics of that age. A likeness has been discovered between Dalgetty and Sir Thomas Urquhart, the translator of Rabelais, whose extraordinary treatises are "human documents" full of unbounded egoism, pedantry, and simplicity.

In *Ivanhoe* (1820) Scott for the first time left Scotland and, for the first time also, celebrated the Middle Ages. The Gothic detail of the novel is not, of course, of the highest order, and minute criticism detects numerous flaws in it; but the general features of a thrilling period were grasped and imitated with that boldness of outline which is the *cachet* of all Scott's best work. The period is the usurpation of John during Richard I's absence in Palestine. The social atmosphere of the book is marked by the fusion between the Norman and Saxon races, while its romance has its centre in the half-mythical figure of Robin Hood. More than this, the panoramic effect of *Ivanhoe*, its dazzling processions of knights and princes over the crowded stage, its introduction of the whole medieval apparatus, ensured it a splendid success. It would be rather difficult to name the most popular of Scott's novels, but the Jewess Rebecca and the passage of arms at Ashby-de-la-Zouch would of themselves give *Ivanhoe* a claim to the dignity. *"Ivanhoe"* (1820).

The Monastery and its sequel *The Abbot* (1820) are again Scottish novels, and their period is the reign of Mary Queen of Scots. In *The Monastery* the White Lady of Avenel, whose supernatural appearances have very little decent mystery and outrage the probability of the story, is a drawback to an admirable book, which is always memorable on account of the Euphuist Sir Piercie Shafton. This knight of choice phrase is a meet companion to Dugald Dalgetty. The threads of *The Monastery* are tightened in *The Abbot*, and by a stronger hand. We come under the personal spell of Queen Mary and share her misfortunes and sufferings, while the hero, Roland Græme, is not a mere walking figure. If Scott confounded history recklessly, he managed to give a very good general picture of his chosen periods. He caught their dramatic side almost as well as Shakespeare, who was equally false to detail; and in *The Abbot* we have a faithful and brilliant reproduction of a peculiarly dramatic and therefore peculiarly difficult era. In *Kenilworth* (1821) he turned to the same age in England, and chose the tragic murder of Amy Robsart at the command of her husband, the Earl of Leicester. *Kenilworth*, like *Ivanhoe*, is one of the novels which everybody has read, and the name of Amy Robsart has left its pitiful impression on the whole of Europe. Fine, how- *"The Monastery" and "The Abbot"* (1820). *"Kenilworth"* (1821).

ever, as is the portrait of the Virgin Queen and her Court, the final tragedy, a harrowing scene of martyrdom, is a victim to the sentimentality that spoils *The Bride of Lammermoor*.

Something of the same sentimentality is to be found in *The Pirate* (1822). But very few if any of Scott's novels are so whole-heartedly romantic; none rises to so lyric a pitch as this extraordinary story of the Shetlands in the eighteenth century. The Udaller and his daughters, the flagitious but prepossessing Cleveland, and the Ossianic Norna, live in a land of shadow, separated from any known country; and the names of strangers and references to foreign lands interfere somewhat with the mysterious harmony of the story. No doubt, as we have implied, the sentiment is rather exaggerated, and Norna of the Fitful Head is too closely related to the fictitious heroines of Ossian; nevertheless it is delightful to live in so excellently conceived a dream and to feel so close a sympathy with its phenomena.

"The Pirate" (1822).

We come, also in 1822, to *The Fortunes of Nigel*, a brilliant book with a typical hero of romance. The scene of the tale is London, the London of James I and the great dramatists; and, in a novel which reads well from beginning to end, the best things are the character of the King and the scenes in Whitefriars. It is one of those fine, gallant, stories which never pall and are, moreover, very true to their period. The picture of London may be compared with the picture of Edinburgh in *The Abbot*. In *Peveril of the Peak* (1823) there is a less successful attempt to portray the Court of Charles II. The centre of the story is Titus Oates' Popish plot; but, although it contains many striking scenes, the book is, as a whole, very disconnected. After a beginning almost too medieval and chivalrous for the period of the Civil War, which gives its tone to the greater part of the book, the introduction of Buckingham and the Court comes as an irrelevant sequel and prolongs the book enormously. *Peveril of the Peak* has nevertheless its own fascination, as the reader who has accomplished his task once knows very well. It was succeeded by *St. Ronan's Well* (1824), a tragic companion to *The Antiquary*. This melancholy story, with all its shortcomings, is an even more remarkable piece of *genre* painting; compared with a tragedy like *The Bride of Lammermoor* it shows infinitely greater strength of drawing and no sentimentality. Its unrelieved sadness, however, has injured its reputation; and this frank attempt at the novel as we now know it, written by Scott in the maturity of his powers, is often overlooked by the casual reader. The third novel, written during the wonderful year 1822, and published just before *St. Ronan's Well*, went back to romance of the most historical type. *Quentin Durward* deals with the reign of Louis XI and the consolidation of the French kingdom. The

"The Fortunes of Nigel" (1822) *and "Peveril"* (1823).

"St. Ronan's Well" (1824).

contrast between Louis and his rival Charles the Bold of Burgundy struck Scott's imagination; and the opening chapter of this novel, which, like most of its kind, takes the form of an historical preface, is a fine piece of narrative writing. The course of the book is strewn with anachronisms; but, in its peculiar grasp of the dramatic side of history, it stands among the first of the novels. Quentin Durward himself does not reach the same rank among heroes. Like all Scott's heroes, or, at least, like so many of them that the criticism may be applied to all, he has every excellent and valiant quality in excess, and is consequently something of a "walking gentleman" in the chronicle of his doings.

"Quentin Durward" (1823).

Darsie Latimer in *Redgauntlet* (1824) is also a prim gentleman whom fate has thrown into adventure by mistake; his friend and fellow-hero, Alan Fairford, is a more lively person. The story in which they take part is certainly, as a mere tale of adventure, one of the best which Scott wrote—a rambling narrative full of hair-breadth episodes and exploits through which we move with the two heroes. Something of the old liking for a restless tale in Fielding's manner is to be seen in this life-like history. However, Scott's treatment of his characters was in this case as objective as ever, although, by using the epistolary form of narrative and recalling his own youth, he gave his imaginary correspondents a distinct individuality. Alan Fairford's description of his father, of the Edinburgh law-courts, and of the irrepressible litigant, Peter Peebles, are very remarkable achievements of observation which stand out from the rest of the book of their own accord; but, apart from these, and in addition to the chain of adventures, there are wonderful digressions, like *Wandering Willie's Tale*, that bold excursion into the supernatural which afterwards, like the whole novel, fired the imagination of Scott's most worthy follower, Robert Louis Stevenson. The epistolary form breaks up the plot which it is intended to supply; but, in so delightful a miscellany, we do not look for any very rigid connection between its various parts.

"Redgauntlet" (1824).

In 1825, just before the misfortune which played so important a part in Scott's later years, appeared the *Tales of the Crusaders*—*The Betrothed* and *The Talisman*. There is much fine and chivalrous writing in *The Betrothed*; but its scene, the Welsh Marches during the conflict between the Normans and Celts, did not altogether fit itself to Scott's imagination, and the book may be reckoned on the whole as his first slip into dulness. What it lacked *The Talisman*, that worthy pendant to *Ivanhoe*, supplied. Scott had never touched the Crusades before, although he had written of the age of Cœur de Lion; and here that sense of contrast, which already had been the motive-power of *Quentin Durward*, came again to give life to a new masterpiece. The

"Tales of the Crusaders" (1825).

contrast between Richard and Saladin, both as men and as types of civilisation—those differences whose emphasis has a reciprocal action—is certainly the attraction which has drawn thousands of readers to *The Talisman* and has sent them away more than contented. The Oriental scenery, again, was a new departure ; and, in reading *The Talisman*, we can only wonder that Scott did not break up this ground before and give us an earlier attempt at this period of history.

"Woodstock" (1826) *and "The Fair Maid of Perth"* (1828).

The first novel after the great crash was *Woodstock* (1826), another romance of the Civil War, and an improvement in some respects upon *Peveril of the Peak*. The contrast between Charles I and Cromwell, of which so much might have been made in the spirit of earlier endeavours, was spoiled, as such a comparison always has been spoiled, by Scott's party bias ; and the novel really becomes a story of private life, with its centre in the old Royalist knight Sir Henry Lee. But, on the whole, Scott's feudal predilections stood in the way of his tales of Cavaliers and Roundheads, who might more appropriately be Crusaders and Infidels ; all his novels of this kind contain a strong element of the unreal ; and *Woodstock*, like *Rokeby* among his poems, is not one of his great masterpieces. *The Fair Maid of Perth* (1828) stands on very much the same level. Its central incident is historical—the murder of the Duke of Rothesay at Falkland—and the period is the end of the fourteenth century. But the romantic tragedy of Rothesay's death is neither accurate history nor first-rate fiction, but hovers rather ineffectively between the two. Here, however, Scott made his point in the distinction between the Highlander and Lowlander, between the young chief Conachar and the Smith of the Wynd. This contrast is a little distorted and complicated by the novel expedient of making the Highlander a coward ; but the subject is as fresh here as in *The Lady of the Lake*, and the treatment is less theatrical. The progress of the story, in these later novels of Scott, is slower than before ; but *The Fair Maid of Perth* suffers little from this, unless in the hands of very young and careless readers.

"Chronicles of the Canongate" (1827-8).

The Fair Maid of Perth was the last of a series of stories, the *Chronicles of the Canongate*, most of which had appeared in 1827. The chronicler himself, Chrystal Croftangry, a retired Scottish gentleman whose life had been full of agitation, opened them with a long and admirable preface. Both this and the stories which follow are oppressed with a certain melancholy and form a striking contrast to the gaiety of Scott's earlier work. *The Two Drovers* and *The Highland Widow*, short, powerful, and disagreeable stories, are *genre* paintings in the manner of *The Antiquary* and *St. Ronan's Well*. In *The Surgeon's Daughter*, which is longer and more ambitious, we have an even nearer approach to the novel of character and temperament. The story takes

place for the most part in India and is none the better for its borrowed scenery and its incredibly villainous hero. The relentless misfortunes of the innocent in this novel are reminiscent of *The Bride of Lammermoor*, but have little of the halo of romance round them. In spite of all this, *The Surgeon's Daughter* has enough interest for a second reading.

Anne of Geierstein (1829) depends upon a further contrast, for whose parallel we must go back to *The Lady of the Lake*. Just as Roderick Dhu and his Highlanders are there compared with the Court of James V, so here the Swiss mountaineers and the feudal Court of Burgundy fall into a similar opposition. The novel has received far less than its due. The historical period to which it belongs is difficult and has no centre of dramatic interest towards which its episodes, in themselves dramatic enough, point. Secondly, the false Gothicism, which Scott had caught from Bürger and the German apostles of romance, never broke out in so fantastic and flamboyant a shape as in the account of the tribunals of the Vehm' Gericht; this, which to the critic is a flagrant breach of taste, has, on the other hand, attracted the uncritical to the book as nothing else in it could have drawn them. Thirdly, the appearance of the novel almost at the end of Scott's life, when his faculties were unquestionably failing, is reckoned against it. Upon the other side of the case, *Anne of Geierstein* is really very little inferior to *Quentin Durward*, and loses little as a companion-picture. The two novels, taken together, are a dramatic commentary on the continental history of the late fifteenth century. Nothing in *Anne of Geierstein* is quite so good as the matchless portrait of Louis XI in *Quentin Durward*; but the picture of "le bon roi René" and his Court has the reality and minute effect of a description by some old chronicler.

"Anne of Geierstein" (1829).

In *Count Robert of Paris* (1832) the real decay of Scott's powers is obvious; and the second book of the same year, *Castle Dangerous*, is the melancholy sign of total eclipse. Even *Count Robert* is not without its stirring passages, and to his long list of portraits of sovereigns Scott certainly added a fresh figure in Alexius Comnenus. *Castle Dangerous*, however, is little more than a commonplace chronicle of medieval exploits, from which the dramatic sense, obvious to the last in such passages of *Count Robert* as the escape from the Blachernal, is conspicuously absent. Yet even this work of the half-dead brain is still read, while the last work of others is forgotten. Not a single novel of the series can be said in our own day to be strictly unpopular; some are far more widely read than the rest, but the names of all are equally well known.

"Count Robert" and *"Castle Dangerous"* (1832).

§ 8. To pronounce any final judgment on this great man's work is difficult. We have already indicated its immediate results on English taste and literature. The poems are the

decisive act of the great revolution which opened the nineteenth century; they destroyed the Bastille of classicism and supplanted that rigid literary uniformity which Johnson, as absolute as Louis XIV, had enforced upon English letters. The novels followed up this outbreak and, so to speak, established a popular constitution under which the new prose and the new poetry flourished in spite of the reactionaries of *The Edinburgh Review*. And it must not be forgotten that the hero of this revolution, the Wizard of the North himself, was, behind the charms and spells he weaved, a very accomplished and judicious critic, a writer of articles and literary biographies which place him on a level with Coleridge, Lamb, and Hazlitt. He was not as philosophical as Coleridge, he had neither the golden impressionability of Lamb nor the pronounced dogmatism of Hazlitt, but he had even wider reading and broader sympathies than those voluminous and admirable critics. In his knowledge of the English drama he was not far behind any of the three; and, as it is incontestable that the critical genius of them all is seen most clearly in their revival of the dormant literature of the Elizabethan age, Scott's challenge to them on their own ground is all the more remarkable. No finer test of Scott's own genius, of the labour and research on which these great romances assumed so splendid a form, can be found than the critical notes to his own poems and novels, his prefaces, his introductory chapters, and the encyclopædia of illustrations and anecdotes which is comprised in his notes and appendices. These are small masterpieces by themselves, the work of a student whose scholarship is to himself a living thing. Like Coleridge and like Lamb in their various degrees, Scott was both scholar and creator; he had the critical faculty and the creative imagination, the first in a very unusual degree, the second in a degree that has never been excelled or even equalled.

Influence of Scott.

His critical capacity.

§ 9. The romantic movement in England starts from Scott and Scott alone. But there were others in whom the romantic instinct was strong, although far less powerfully developed, and of these writers, whose position in the evolution of prose fiction is irregular, we must now speak. Each in his own way contributed to the progress of English romanticism, or—so far as the older members of the band are concerned—showed that restless tendency which found its satisfaction in Scott. None of them had any inclination whatever to the imitation of real life; their minds were occupied with terrors and supernatural wonders, ineffectual ghosts and gentlemanlike bravoes. Their industry was too small to admit of their being called a "school"; they wrote idly of midnight horrors and vampires because it pleased them. This fashion, which at its worst was very innocent, was set by HORACE WALPOLE, the fastidious dilettante and brilliant chronicler of the Court scandal of his day, whose letters to

Subdivisions of romance: the tale of terror.

Sir Horace Mann place him among the most accomplished of English letter-writers. His *Castle of Otranto* (1764) was the first of a series of books which, until the arrival of Scott, followed the same kind of theme with very slight variations. It was a short tale, written with great rapidity and without preparation, in which the reader found himself carried back for the first time to the Middle Ages and placed in contact with something that stood for feudal society. It did not matter that the Gothic setting of the book was as unreal as Walpole's pseudo-Gothic villa at Strawberry Hill, that its feudal cavaliers spoke and behaved in a manner unknown to any age, that everything in it was extravagantly preposterous, and that the heroine, a creature of sentimental and unreasonable misfortune, had as little medieval warrant as any of Henry Mackenzie's lachrymose damsels. For the first time the English reader felt an emotion of superstitious terror as he gazed on print and saw the workings of supernatural machinery displayed in it. The medievalism of *The Castle of Otranto* was spurious, and the local colour might have done duty for any place as well as Otranto; but in the gigantic armed figures dimly seen at midnight as the watcher crossed a gloomy hall or echoing corridor, in the colossal helmet, fruitful of so much consternation, which made its irresponsible way into the courtyard, in the liberal allowance of secret panels, subterranean passages, breathless pursuit and escape, there was something promising. *The Castle of Otranto* and its successors were themselves the secret panels through which many crept into the undiscovered room of genuine romance.

HORACE WALPOLE (1717-1797). "*The Castle of Otranto*" (1764).

The Castle of Otranto belongs, it will be noticed, to the last decade of the great eighteenth-century novel, the decade of *Tristram Shandy* and *The Vicar of Wakefield*. The thirty years which followed *Humphrey Clinker* (1771) were years of transition; and, in a later chapter, we shall see something more of the tendencies which, during this unsettled time, had their place in English fiction. It is now enough to say that the novel of mystery and terror was certainly the ruling influence of the period, and that it borrowed very freely from its more sentimental contemporaries. The tearfulness which had its origin in Sterne is found in most of these impossible narratives, invariably lending colour to the general behaviour of the heroine and the chivalry of the hero. Horace Walpole was followed by CLARA REEVE, whose *Old English Baron* (1777), originally called *The Champion of Virtue*, was a painstaking and well-meant picture of feudal society. It belongs to this class of book rather by virtue of its medievalism than by any note of terror in its somewhat hum-drum plot; but its publication marks the fact that, during thirteen years, Horace Walpole's extraordinary romance had been gaining in popularity, and had encouraged a new writer to

CLARA REEVE (1729-1807).

make an experiment in the same field. But neither Walpole nor Miss Reeve had devoted themselves entirely to writing terrifying romances. This exclusive preoccupation was reserved for ANN RADCLIFFE, *née* Ward, whose numerous stories carried the art to its highest pitch and fascinated hosts of readers.

ANN RADCLIFFE (1764–1822).

Mrs. Radcliffe's heroines are sentimentality incarnate; they are deserted by their lovers; they fall into the hands of wicked counts and are taken to remote castles amid the perpetual twilight of pine-woods and Pyrenean gorges, where mysterious doors clang and pictures speak, where hollow whispers echo up turret-stairs, and a faithful maid-servant, full of dark anecdote, is the sole consolation of the fair prisoner. The most famous of these tales of mystery is, of course, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794); but its predecessor, *The Romance of the Forest* (1791), and its successor, *The Italian* (1797), were also very popular. So far as any book which is founded on vulgar sensation can be a masterpiece, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* claims that distinction. Mrs. Radcliffe was innocent of any skill in painting character; there is not much room for life in sighing heroines and phantom monks, and what there is she did not fill; but she excited terror by her accumulation of horrors and by an artistic gift of reticence which avoided too many details and left much to be explained. It was an unhappy blot on her art that, after she had succeeded in setting her readers' hair on end through the whole of a long book, she cleared up and rationalised all her mysteries. To deal in the supernatural so extensively and to disavow it so frankly is a weak paradox; and, had Mrs. Radcliffe been faithful to her ghosts and eerie noises, her romances might have lived longer. However, she had her vogue in a day when novels were few and far between; and many unsophisticated young ladies, like the heroine of *Northanger Abbey*, doubtless sympathised with her hapless virgins in their sorrows and distresses, and shared their suspense before forbidding portals and haunted alcoves. Mrs. Radcliffe, in everything but her romantic subjects, is of the eighteenth century; her sentimentalism and the verses which it inspires have that angularity of outline, that primness of complexion common to all the work of the half century before her. The natural advantages and the Italian Gothicism of the castle of Udolpho have more in common with the Castle of Indolence than with any of Scott's feudal keeps. Her observation of nature runs in that moralising vein which became so commonplace after a few great poets had worked it thoroughly; her style is never very brilliant, but is sententious, periphrastic, and Johnsonian. The quality which determined the popularity of her fictions was that, for those who came to them inquisitively and with the apprehension that sensitive people feel before the mouth of a dark crypt or cavern, she did not merely provide bare darkness and mystery, but set a substantial terror in every avenue and behind each pillar.

Mrs. Radcliffe had her imitators, the majority of whom are not worth mentioning. Much about the same time as the *Mysteries of Udolpho* appeared an outrageously supernatural romance, *Ambrosio, or the Monk* (1795), which fastened on its author, MATTHEW GREGORY LEWIS, the perpetual nickname of "Monk" Lewis. He was a good-natured, effeminate man of fashion, who owned property in the West Indies and was member of Parliament for Hindon. The influence which directed his work was the German romanticism of Schiller, Bürger, and the rest; this fact and the impetus which he gave to Scott's early endeavours, place him in the straight line of romantic progress. *The Monk* contained many powerfully written passages; and the episode of the Bleeding Nun, with its introduction of the Wandering Jew, was an especially faithful imitation of the Teutonic model; the great popularity of the book depended, however, on its morbid and feebly licentious suggestion. Lewis was very prolific and wrote many other novels and ballads, in which he was alternately mysterious and plaintive. He was surpassed in his own line by CHARLES ROBERT MATURIN, an Irish clergyman of great promise and greater vanity, whose character was, in all its features, an extravagant caricature of the traits of his nation. He wrote several romances, in one or two of which he essayed history; but the book by which he continues to be known is *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820), a farrago of impossible and inconceivable adventures without plan or coherence, in which the Devil (represented as an Irish gentleman of good family) is the principal agent. Scott and Byron, who were both friends of "Monk" Lewis, recognised the talent of this curious person, who certainly could horrify his readers; and his first tragedy, *Bertram* (1816), with the help of favourable criticism, succeeded at Drury Lane. His life was short and unhappy; but his reputation lived for a long time in *Melmoth*, which was read on the Continent as well as in England.

MATTHEW GREGORY LEWIS (1775–1818).

CHARLES ROBERT MATURIN (1782–1824).

Melmoth, in point of time, is the latest of the great tales of terror; but it is so obviously the eldest child of Lewis' *Monk* that its natural place is before the *Frankenstein* of MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT SHELLEY, the daughter of a novelist who belongs to a subsequent chapter, and the wife of a poet who himself had published (1810) two absurd tales in Lewis' manner, *Zastrozzi* and *St. Irvyne*. *Frankenstein* (1818) is immeasurably better than these, and is the only story of its kind that should have a lively interest for the student of the present day; it shows that this monstrous type of fiction was capable of a higher artistic virtue than Mrs. Radcliffe had communicated to it. A young physiologist succeeds in constructing out of the horrid remnants of the churchyard and dissecting-room a monster, to which he gives, by some galvanic agency artfully concealed to heighten

MRS. SHELLEY (1797–1851). "*Frankenstein*" (1818).

terror, a kind of spectral and convulsive life. This existence is insupportable to the monster, who vainly craves after human sympathy, and employs his time in avenging his creation upon his guilty creator. Some of his chief appearances, particularly the moment when he begins to move for the first time, and his sudden manifestation among the eternal snows of the Arctic circle, are managed with a striking and breathless effect that makes us for a moment forget the childish improbability and melodramatic extravagance of the tale.

Oriental Romances. WILLIAM BECKFORD (1759–1844). "*Vathek*" (1787).

§ 10. Another subdivision of romance is, in its principal representative, very closely allied to the tale of terror. Perhaps *Vathek* (1787)—the earliest edition was a pirated translation in 1784—is best described as an "Oriental novel." WILLIAM BECKFORD was an extraordinary and eccentric person, who lived an elaborately artificial life and built himself a huge pseudo-Gothic mansion in Wiltshire—the famous Fonthill Abbey. The key to his character was madness; but he was at the same time a philosopher and something of a cynic, and borrowed much of his thought from the French Encyclopædists. Like Gibbon, he had a preference for French as a literary vehicle, and wrote *Vathek* at first in French; he subsequently translated it into English and gave it a permanent form. It is a very short book whose cold sarcasm and refinement of style show traces of Voltaire's *Zadig*. However, its satire is not conspicuously original, and its chief virtue consists in its imagination and fidelity to local colour. Indeed, if we set aside its ironical intention, it might pass for a translation of one of *The Thousand and One Nights*. Vathek is a haughty and effeminate Arabian monarch who, obeying the temptations of a malignant genie and the sophistries of a cruel and ambitious mother, is induced to commit all sorts of crimes, to abjure his faith, and to offer allegiance to Eblis, the Mohammedan Satan, in the hope of setting himself on the throne of the pre-Adamite sultans. The gradual development in his mind of sensuality, cruelty, atheism, and insane Titanic ambition, is far superior to the theatrical, lath-and-plaster character-painting of the best terrorists; the imagery throughout the book is consistently sustained; and the final scene is simply a florid piece of lyric prose, which may cautiously be compared with Coleridge's *Kubla Khan*. Vathek descends into Eblis' subterranean palace and wanders for awhile amid the splendours of that region of punishment. No imagination can be more terrible than that of "the vast multitude, incessantly passing, who severally kept their right hands on their heart, without once regarding anything around them. They all avoided each other, and, though surrounded by a multitude that no one could number, each wandered at random, unheedful of rest, as if alone on a desert where no foot had trodden."

Obviously, *Vathek*, with all its terrors, is better than the

common tale of terror; while, on the other hand, it dovetails into no other kind of romance. The *Anastasius* (1819) of THOMAS HOPE is similarly an orphan production in which *Vathek* cannot be said to have had any hand. However, this Turco-Greek tale had been preceded, from 1813 to 1815, by Byron's most brilliant Oriental romances in verse, and was no doubt inspired by them. Hope, like Beckford, was a man of refined taste, luxurious habits, and great wealth, which had been accumulated in business. *Anastasius* is the autobiography of a Greek who, to escape the consequences of a wholesale devotion to crime and villainy, becomes a renegade and passes through a long series of the most extraordinary and romantic vicissitudes. He is a compound of almost all the vices of his unfortunate and degraded nation, and, in his unregulated character and passionate, elaborate style, certainly is a good companion to Byron's heroes. In its panorama of the whole social, religious, and political life of Turkey and the Morea, as well as in its general luxuriance of atmosphere, the romance might certainly have been of Byron's writing.

THOMAS HOPE (1770?–1831).

The *Hajji Baba* (1824) of JAMES JUSTINIAN MORIER is in every way a contrast to these gloomy and picturesque books. Morier lived for most of his life in the East, and, as British minister in Persia, became profoundly acquainted with Oriental character. *Hajji Baba*, therefore, is a realistic transcript of manners and customs rather than a work of imagination. Morier had abundant humour; his book is the *Gil Blas* of Eastern life. His hero is a barber of Ispahan, who passes through a long and very various series of adventures, such as happen in the despotic governments of the East, where the pipe-bearer of one day may become the vizier of the next. He is an easy, merry, good-for-nothing whose admirable dexterity and gaiety meet with equally admirable punishments, and bring him into contact with every grade and phase of Oriental existence. Perhaps there is no modern book which gives so vast and true a picture of the life of those countries. The Hajji is not only a thorough Oriental, but a perfect specimen of the lower-class Persian, clever, unscrupulous, and always amusing. In the continuation of the story he comes to England in the suite of an embassy from "the asylum of the universe," which gives an opportunity for the description of a foreigner's first impressions of the country. This often has been done and done badly, but nothing could be more natural or more comic than the Hajji's relation of his English adventures, his surprise at the freedom of Englishwomen, his admiration of the "moonfaces," and, above all, his astonished wonder at the "Coompany," the great enigma to all Orientals.

JAMES MORIER (1780?–1849).

JAMES BAILLIE FRASER followed Morier with two Eastern romances, *The Kuzzilbash, a Tale of Khorasan* (1828) and *The Persian Adventurer* (1830). The

J. B. FRASER (1783–1856).

popularity of this kind of tale was the obvious sequel of Moore's *Lalla Rookh* (1817), which had provoked the public to an interest in the East at a time when Byron had revived the dormant traditions of the Balkan Peninsula.

§ 11. The historical romance, properly speaking, has no worthy representative other than Scott. Some ladies preceded him with faltering steps. SOPHIA LEE'S *Recess* (1785) claimed to be an historical romance. Her younger sister HARRIET LEE took the chief part in a collection called *The Canterbury Tales* (1797), which hovered undecidedly between history and the love of terror. One of these, *Kruitzner, or the German's Tale*, made a great impression on Byron, whose *Werner* (1822) was a dramatic version of the narrative. The other ladies, it has been said, had a more direct influence on Scott. JANE and ANNA MARIA PORTER were two sisters whose popular novels were, in their ultra-sentimental tone, under serious obligations to the school of terror. Impossibly ideal heroes, blameless and injured heroines, flourished in an exquisite atmosphere of chivalry, performed incredible deeds of valour, and endured shocking sufferings, to the mingled delight and horror of young ladies who met here for the first time with novels that it was possible to read without fear of discovery. Jane was the more ingenious of the pair, and *Thaddeus of Warsaw* (1803) and *The Scottish Chiefs* (1810) have more merit than might be expected. The historical element in *The Scottish Chiefs* is well worked up; and the result is something a very little short of life. The tone of Miss Porter's novels may be compared with that of the romances of a much younger person, the Spanish Jewess, GRACE AGUILAR, who was born in the year of *The Antiquary*, and died when only thirty-one. She was learned in the Jewish religion, and was the authoress of several long novels, which, for the most part, were edited and published posthumously by her mother, and are chiefly concerned with the fortunes of Jewish heroines. They all were very popular as tales *pour les jeunes filles*, and contained no harm beyond their excessive abuse of sentiment. Miss Aguilar belongs to no special class of novelists; her style and method were alike eighteenth-century and commonplace; and it is only by her *Days of Bruce* (1852), a book not unlike *The Scottish Chiefs*, and the less rigidly historical *Vale of Cedars* (1850), that she deserves mention here.

Historical romances.
SOPHIA *and* HARRIET LEE (1750–1824 *and* 1757–1851).

JANE *and* ANNA MARIA PORTER (1776–1850 *and* 1780–1832).

GRACE AGUILAR (1816–1847).

The most industrious imitator of Scott was GEORGE PAYNE RAINSFORD JAMES, the son of a London doctor. James began to write with *Richelieu* (1829), and, between that year and 1860, wrote over a hundred novels. He had a great deal of antiquarian knowledge, and was greatly interested in French history; but he had neither invention nor imagination, and wrote according to a fixed

G. P. R. JAMES (1801–1860).

recipe. The two horsemen who (unless reduced by one) invariably opened his lifeless tales of chivalry, can scarcely be called his creation, nor had he the monopoly of woodland scenery and crazy jesters; but he did all he could with them, and precluded their future appropriation. He became Historiographer Royal, and died as consul at Venice. The best that can be said of James is that his novels show a very painstaking disposition; and it must be allowed that he has been laughed at more than he actually deserves; however, nothing but a terribly defective sense of humour could have induced a man to persevere in such a course of dulness and monotony, painting men and women without humanity or semblance of real passion, and scenes without a title to variety.

It may seem rather invidious to say that the utterly impossible romances of WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH are better than the icy tales of James; the distinction certainly gives Ainsworth no great literary honour. He was a Manchester man; and Lancashire scenes and people played a large part in his stories. His first book, *Sir John Chiverton* (1826), probably written in collaboration with John Partington Aston, was published three years before *Richelieu*; and he went on writing till late in the seventies. His style was too slipshod to deserve the name, nor was his history in any sense trustworthy. Such novels, however, as *The Tower of London* (1840) and *Old St. Paul's* (1841) were very interesting to lovers of complicated and sensational plots, and his work never suffered from a dearth of incident; on the contrary, he invented situations so readily that he lost any sense of the distinction between probability and improbability. *Crichton* (1837) is a glaring example of the length to which his imagination could go. On the other hand, many of his books were shamelessly deficient in plot. *The Manchester Rebels* (1873), for example, is simply an historical epitome, the mere shadow of a connected story. Whether Ainsworth's popularity will last would be a difficult and not very useful question to determine; he certainly is still read by many who like a good story and consider literary excellence a detail. It is certain, however, that Cruikshank's splendid illustrations to his better romances will do more to keep their fame alive than any merit of their own.

WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH (1805–1882).

§ 12. The minor writers whom we have just mentioned owe their place in our memory and in any history of English literature to the fact that, whatever the direct parentage of their work may have been, they are all attracted to the magnetic centre of Scott. *Vathek*, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, and *The Scottish Chiefs*, with their differences and various excellence, point forward to the coming of Scott as surely as *Richelieu* and *The Tower of London* derive their uncertain life from that great source. The influence which was most powerful in Scott's case was, as we have seen, not prose fiction, but ballad poetry. The

Exclusive importance of Scott in romantic fiction.

German romanticism which coloured and inspired his earliest work, the Gothic fancies of Bürger and Goethe, also produced the tale of terror in its wildest form. But the tale of terror was simply the passing expression of a phase, the recognition of superficial mystery which is always the first impression derived from Gothic art, and wears away before long. In reality the corridors of Udolpho are no whit more Gothic or medieval than the vaults so sonorously described by Congreve in *The Mourning Bride*. The real colour of medieval romance was given to fiction by Scott; and it is very doubtful whether, among his subsequent imitators, any caught even the most pallid illumination from his genius. James and Ainsworth do very little credit to their particular form of art, nor can the immense advance shown, during their lifetime, by the historical novels of Lytton be reckoned a great success. The truth is that romantic fiction in England is simply a subdivision of that great poetic movement to which we are coming, and that, taken by itself, it is not representative of the English novel. Scott's poems opened the way for his romances. *Waverley* would not have succeeded so immediately had the public not begun by enjoying *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*. The constitution of the English novel had, once and for all, been established by the great band of humorists of the eighteenth century, and more especially by Fielding; its office was to depict contemporary life and manners, to give a faithful portrait of society. We have seen that Scott himself imitated Fielding in *Waverley*; that, in *St. Ronan's Well*, he left romance and wrote a novel which, allowing for differences, might have been written by George Eliot. By far the most distinguished, after Scott, of contemporary writers of fiction leaned naturally to the novel of manners; even writers like Thomas Love Peacock, who is fanciful enough to be considered romantic, concealed rather obviously beneath their vagrant imaginations a deliberate intention of social satire. Godwin, and the more romantic Bage, have little in common with the historical and medieval tale. The conclusion is that, as an historical novelist, we have never had anyone like Scott. To all his successors the art has been foreign; they either ought to have written nothing at all, or could have written other things much better. Scott stands as the great populariser, the great revealer, the magician who enthralled an audience proof against other enchantments. But his work is isolated in its kind; it is the outward and visible sign of a movement which meant far more than an external romanticism or medievalism, and to that movement it forms the proper introduction, while it is its explanation and commentary.

Relation of romance to the orthodox novel.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE POETS OF THE ROMANTIC MOVEMENT.

I. WORDSWORTH, COLERIDGE, AND SOUTHEY.

§ 1. The share of the Lake Poets in the romantic movement. § 2. WILLIAM WORDSWORTH: his life. § 3. His poetry: its peculiarities; its place in the movement. § 4. SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE. Life. § 5. Coleridge's poetry: *Kubla Khan*, *The Ancient Mariner*, *Christabel*. His importance as a prose critic. § 6. Life of ROBERT SOUTHEY. § 7. Southey's prose and poetry; his defects as a poet and his relative position in nineteenth-century literature.

§ 1. THE introduction of Scott into this history has been in one sense rather premature. We have explained, however, that the external and objective side of the romantic movement was indicated chiefly by him, that his poetry was the force which drove people into an obvious recognition of the fact that eighteenth-century poetry, with its stilted and, as time went on, fatuous vocabulary, was a thing of the past, and that the opening of the new century was the beginning of a new chapter in English letters. It was therefore proper to give some account of Scott and the progress of romantic fiction, the more popular manifestation of the new spirit, before proceeding to those greater and more subjective poets whose quiet, and at first rarely appreciated, work was the actual starting-point of English literature as we know it to-day. The publication of *Lyrical Ballads* (1798) was the definite beginning of a literary epoch which already has lasted a century and seems likely, so far as we can tell, to retain its influence for many years to come; and the real apostles of the romantic movement were Wordsworth and Coleridge. The theories which Wordsworth laid down in his prefaces and introductory essays to the *Lyrical Ballads*, the deeper and sounder critical writings which Coleridge left behind him, are still extant to explain the object sought by these great and original poets. Their work, we have seen, did not break upon the world with a total novelty; there had been a very marked transition from the nature-poetry of Thomson to their own. Gray's *Elegy* had been an advance on

Literary importance of the Lake poets.

Their link with the past.

The Seasons; and Cowper, in his turn, had used a more flexible vocabulary than Gray. The mystic relation between man and nature which is the secret of the romantic movement had assumed articulate shape very gradually. Collins' *Ode to Evening*, for example, shows a precocious sense of that wonderful mystery, cramped by the irons of a cold and formal vocabulary, a tradition of inexpressive words which, in their scantiness and absolute lack of variety, were quite enough to kill poetry for ever. Nevertheless, in spite of the obstacle of a fixed poetic diction, progress had been made. Cowper, still tied to formality, anticipates Wordsworth and forms a fresh link in the chain of poetry; Crabbe gives his verse something of the homeliness and simplicity which formed so important a part of Wordsworth's theory. There are signs and mutterings which precede every revolution; and the romantic movement had many such harbingers. Consequently, the new poetry, by itself, would have been no great surprise to readers; its revolutionary element lay, not in the novelty of its manner, but in the novelty of the theories which accompanied it. Side by side with it came a formulated scheme, a new gospel and philosophy of poetry, laying down principles which gained ardent disciples and excited conservative hostility. The new poets worked upon a system, a constitution which, in spite of individual prejudices and mutual criticism, laid down as its first law the sincere recognition of nature in its indefinable relation to man, and, as an inevitable corollary, the doctrine of a new and free poetic diction. This, now so familiar and so firmly established that it seems an eternal axiom, was the foundation of a theory which at first met with the most pronounced opposition and finally had to triumph on its own merits. Poetry, as is always the case, transmitted its laws to prose; and the romantic spirit occupied the whole of English literature.

Their formulated theories the reason of their early unpopularity.

§ 2. The twin founders of modern English poetry are known from their ultimate place of residence as the Lake Poets; and with them has always been associated a third, the less original Southey, a writer of admirable prose, but in no sense a great poet. WILLIAM WORDSWORTH was born at Cockermouth on April 7, 1770, while Johnson's literary dictatorship was at its height. His father was an attorney; his mother died when he was scarcely eight years old. In his ninth year he was sent to school at Hawkshead, on the shores of Coniston, where the boys, instead of living under the same roof with a master, were boarded among the villagers and were at liberty to roam over the surrounding country by day and night. Thus, during the first years of his life, Wordsworth steeped his imagination in the splendid scenery of the English Lakes, slowly developing his poetical talent. When he was nearly fourteen, his father died, and his two uncles took

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770–1850).

charge of the orphan family. They kept him at Hawkshead until he was seventeen, and then sent him to St. John's College, Cambridge (1787). Here he did very little but take his degree; he resided for the ordinary time, taking his share in the amusements of the University, reading and meditating a great deal, and spending his holidays, like Gray, in picturesque tours. His brother Christopher, on the other hand, who had been at Trinity, clave to Cambridge, became Master of his illustrious college, and was the founder of the great episcopal family of Wordsworth. The poet's tastes called him in another direction. In 1791 he left St. John's and went abroad, landed at Calais on the eve of "the feast of pikes," and travelled to Switzerland through Burgundy and Dauphiné. The dawn of the French Revolution unsettled him; and he embraced the ideas of the most extreme republicans. These early dreams were the cause which confirmed him in his romanticism. The spiritual history of this intellectual crisis may be read in *The Prelude*. Like many other poets, he lived to see his hopes disappear in the chaos of 1793 and the empire of Napoleon; but, although he renounced his extreme politics and became little by little a steady Conservative, he never lost the bright reflection of his early impressions or doubted their truth. "After a long spell of depression, bewilderment, mortification, and sore disappointment," writes Mr. John Morley, "the old faith in new shapes was given back." If one manifestation failed, another must succeed. In the early part of 1792 he was at Orleans and Blois; in October, 1792, when the tragedy was hurrying to its climax, he was in Paris and was compelled by his friends to return to England. During this period of his life, his relatives had felt some anxiety and doubt on his behalf; and it was to vindicate his talent that he began to publish. In 1793 a little book appeared containing two poems in the heroic couplet, *An Evening Walk*, which referred to the Lakes and had been written between 1787 and 1789, and the *Descriptive Sketches*, which were the result of his tour in the Alps and were written in France during 1791 and 1792. The second poem shows a certain advance upon the first and approximates more nearly to the eventual standard of the *Lyrical Ballads*; but both bear signs of that unmistakable simplicity which is emphatically Wordsworthian.

At Cambridge.

Revolutionary enthusiasm.

Earliest poems (1793).

The history of Wordsworth's life is primarily intellectual; and it is important to notice the influences which moved him during this early period. His obligations to the *Nocturnal Reverie* of Lady Winchilsea are not only implied in his preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, but have been discovered in his earliest pieces, the *Evening Walk* and the sonnet "written in very early youth" (1786). The very fine *Remembrance of Collins* (1789) bears obvious witness to a second influence, indirectly referring us to

Influence of elder poets on Wordsworth: its result.

Thomson. That he studied Thomson, and especially *The Castle of Indolence*, is the testimony of many of his poems both early and late. In 1815 he wrote a sonnet to the memory of John Dyer, the author of *The Fleece* and *Grongar Hill*. We can find no clearer proof of the debt which Wordsworth owed to the close study of the pioneers of nature-poetry, no surer sign of his position in the direct chain of English poets. In 1793–4 he finished his story of *Guilt and Sorrow*, known better as *Salisbury Plain*, which had been begun two years before and was partially published in 1798 under the title of *The Female Vagrant*. A long ramble over Salisbury Plain, during which his mind was oppressed by the terrible result of the Revolution, led to its completion; but it was not published in its final form till 1842. It is written in the Spenserian stanza of *The Castle of Indolence*, and is the first of Wordsworth's great poems. Not long after he had written it, his perplexities and wanderings came to an end. A friend named Raisley Calvert left him a legacy of £900 in 1795, and so enabled him to indulge the great wish of his heart, to live with that most remarkable of women, his sister Dorothy, and devote himself entirely to poetry. Although the legacy was small, it was enough for his simple tastes. No one could be more frugal or economic; his Hawkshead training had taught him the art of plain living; and during his travels he had fallen into no serious temptation. Such temperance and economy, natural to him from childhood, gave his character a rigid austerity and coldness which are clearly perceptible in his poetry and certainly do not add to its attractions.

Beginning of life with his sister.

In the autumn of 1795 he and his sister went to live at Racedown, on the borders of Somerset and Dorset. He began by paraphrasing several satires of Juvenal and applying them to the political abuses which his creed denounced; these, however, he never published. His second experiment was the tragedy of *The Borderers*, written during 1795–6, rejected by Covent Garden, and not printed until 1842. The active co-operation of Dorothy Wordsworth in his work is an influence not to be forgotten; as a participatress in her brother's tastes, as a sympathetic critic, and, above all, as a woman of singular intellectual power and originality, she became Wordsworth's second self. In June, 1797, a second critic came to Racedown from his home in West Somerset. Coleridge and Wordsworth had met before; but this short visit cemented their acquaintance. A month later the Wordsworths moved to Alfoxden in the Quantocks, close to Coleridge's temporary home at Nether Stowey. The story of the plan which had its result in *Lyrical Ballads* is more properly part of Coleridge's life than Wordsworth's; at present it is enough to say that the volume was intended to defray the expenses of a walking tour in the Quantocks and Exmoor which the

Life at Racedown.

Removal to Alfoxden and publication of "Lyrical Ballads" (1798).

three friends took during the early winter of 1797. It was published in the following September by an ardent Bristol bookseller, Joseph Cottle, the friend and early patron of Coleridge; it opened with Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*; but the bulk of the little volume consisted of pieces by Wordsworth, of which the chief was unquestionably *Tintern Abbey*. The rest, like *The Idiot Boy* and *Simon Lee*, were those famous experiments in so-called simple diction whose lack of humour and more than occasional inanity unfortunately have been regarded by careless readers as typical of Wordsworth's style. They were the sincere expression of a dogmatic theory on the poetry of rustic life which was formulated two years later, when the second edition appeared. In the same month (September) the Wordsworths and Coleridge travelled together to Germany. Coleridge left them after their visit to Klopstock, the German epic poet; and the brother and sister stayed for four months at Goslar in Saxony. They lodged at a draper's house during a bitter winter, Wordsworth exclaiming, "A plague on your languages, German and Norse!" and working up reminiscences of Alfoxden and other places into verse. But, on returning to England in 1799, they did not go back to Somerset; but sought their native Lakes, taking a cottage at the north end of Grasmere. The valley which they chose for their home became the central shrine of English poetry during the next half century. Coleridge soon followed them to the Lakes, and was followed in his turn by Southey. John Wilson, of *Blackwood's Magazine*, was living on Windermere; and, in 1809, De Quincey, the most brilliant of journalists, came to live at Grasmere. The indiscriminate title of "The Lake School," has been applied to this constellation of men of letters who had no very great community of aim or method and were not invariably on the best terms. Nevertheless, by the geographical position of their homes, "The Lake School" they seem destined to remain.

Travels in Germany.

Settlement at Grasmere.

Wordsworth began *The Prelude* soon after reaching Grasmere. This review of his intellectual progress, which has appealed so differently to different readers, was finished in 1805, but was not fully published till July, 1850, nearly three months after his death. It was addressed to Coleridge, who read much of it during his erratic journeys in the South of Europe. Meanwhile, Wordsworth was preparing a second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*, which appeared in 1800, augmented by a second volume and by the famous preface on poetic style and diction. While Wordsworth's criticisms were in the main justifiable, their dogmatic tone was infallibly a challenge to reactionaries, who, in assailing them, attacked the poems also. Moreover, the poems in themselves were not altogether illustrative of their author's theory; and Coleridge, in his *Biographia Literaria*,

Composition of "The Prelude" and second edition of "Lyrical Ballads" (1800).

very conclusively proved the discrepancy between the conversational language of common life and its imitation in *Lyrical Ballads*. Wordsworth henceforward had to meet with opposition. His personal circumstances were at the same time much improved by an addition to his income. A long-standing debt which had been due to his father was paid to the family in 1802, when the debtor, Lord Lonsdale, died. His own share enabled him to marry his sister's friend, Mary Hutchinson, to whom he had been long attached; and it was during 1802 and the succeeding years that he wrote some of his noblest poetry. Most of this appeared in two volumes of *Poems* (1807), which contained the *Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle*, and, with that magnificent triumph of lyric song, his first sonnets, the *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*, the *Ode to Duty*, *Peele Castle*, *Resolution and Independence* (better known as "the Leech-Gatherer"), and *The Happy Warrior*. When we add to these such exquisite minor pieces as *Yarrow Unvisited*, and the famous *I wandered lonely as a cloud*, it is unquestionable that in these two volumes we see Wordsworth at his prime.

Wordsworth's marriage. Poems of 1807.

The minor poems of the following years up to 1814 are not many; they are chiefly political sonnets, inspired by the indignation which he felt at the grasping tyranny of Napoleon and the Convention of Cintra. In 1809 he published a pamphlet against the Convention; but his protest awakened little enthusiasm. During this period he had changed his residence from his cottage at Town-end (which De Quincey occupied after 1809) to another cottage near Grasmere, at Allan Bank; in 1810 he migrated to Grasmere parsonage; and in 1813 he finally removed to Rydal Mount, at the southern end of the lake. He had been preparing for many years a poem, first planned at Racedown and Alfoxden, and meditated ever since. This, the first-fruits of Rydal, was published as *The Excursion* (1814). It formed a fragment of a projected moral epic which was to discuss and solve the mightiest questions concerning God, nature, man, our moral constitution, our duties, and our hopes. *The Excursion* is the epic of Wordsworth's later style, as *The Prelude* is of his earlier; with small dramatic interest and a construction that owes very little to art, it has nevertheless the fullest share of that elevation of tone and that superhuman quietism which grew stronger as the poet grew older.

1807–1814.

Publication of "The Excursion" (1814).

The White Doe of Rylstone, written in 1807, was published in 1815. This was Wordsworth's single effort in prolonged narrative. Its subject was melancholy, turning chiefly on the complete ruin of a north-country family in the "Rising of the North" of 1569; its atmosphere of mysterious and supernatural influence, combined with the purity and unearthliness of the

"The White Doe" and "Laodamia" (1815).

characters, and the part played in the story by the White Doe, communicate a certain fantasy and unreality to it. Beautiful as the poem certainly is, its beauty is not superficial, and it had little popularity. Even Scott's unfortunate *Rokeby*, which contained the germ of good narrative-poetry, had been more popular. *Laodamia*, a short piece, published in the same year, is at once a contrast to *The White Doe* and remarkable as the one poem in which Wordsworth surrendered himself completely to the charm of classical poetry. "It cost me," he wrote, "more trouble than almost anything of equal length I have ever written"; but in its antique, finely-moulded stanzas, he approached that kind of poetry which, in Shelley, Keats, and Tennyson, is one of the greatest glories of the nineteenth century. His next important publication was *Peter Bell* (1819). This poem had been written twenty-one years before, during the period of Alfoxden and the *Lyrical Ballads*; but, in his dedication to Southey, Wordsworth confessed that he had corrected and re-corrected it in the interval to render it worthy of a permanent place in the national literature. It was another experiment in that simplicity of diction which, in the *Lyrical Ballads*, already had achieved a rather dubious fame. But Wordsworth had acquired no sense of humour since 1798. He meant his poem to be taken seriously, and had not denied it beauty; but when his readers, who had formed high expectations from the dedication, went on to read a prologue of unutterable puerility and a story in which simple sentiment was almost obliterated by bathos, they were naturally exasperated. *Peter Bell* was received with a chorus of ridicule, and it is wonderful that it did not injure Wordsworth permanently; to-day it remains, in spite of its readily acknowledged beauties and its modified absurdities, a monument of the faults which spring from a defective sense of humour. Wordsworth as yet had achieved nothing that could be called popularity. Up to 1819, and after all his more obvious masterpieces had been published, he had not earned £140 by his poetry. The chief source of his income came from his post as distributor of stamps for the county of Westmorland, which he had gained through the influence of Lord Lonsdale. This brought him in about £500 a year. His economy, however, made riches unnecessary to him, and he and his household never ran the risk of impecuniosity.

"Peter Bell" (1819).

His day, however, was coming. Between 1820 and 1830 his best work consisted of sonnets. The sonnet-cycle called *The River Duddon* was written and published in 1820; the first edition of the *Ecclesiastical Sonnets*, to which he added several new poems in later years, appeared in 1822. By 1830 the popularity of Scott and Byron was a thing of the past. Byron was dead, and Scott was sinking into that decline which Wordsworth bewailed in the splendid sonnet following *Yarrow Revisited*. No third

1820–1830. *Growth of popularity.*

king arose to demand homage; and during this interregnum the great poet whose less thrilling notes had hitherto been unheard, obtained his first hearing. *Yarrow Revisited* (1835), a cycle of sonnets and other poems, is certainly the most prominent work of this decade, and, with such pieces as the *Extempore Effusion on the Death of James Hogg*, is a remarkable addition to his earlier work. He travelled both at home and abroad during this time, and the largest portion of his work was now devoted to the recollection of his journeys. The *Memorials of a Tour in Italy*, written in 1837, appeared in 1842, and in the next year, on Southey's death, he became Poet Laureate and wrote little more of any importance. He died at Rydal Mount on April 23, 1850, when he had just completed his eightieth year. His grave in Grasmere Churchyard is known to all who have visited the Lakes.

Later years and death.

§ 3. Wordsworth's poetry has passed through two phases of criticism, in which the appreciation of his merits succeeded to the blame of his defects. Even now, when we are more just to both, when we are ready to confess him a great poet and at the same time to acknowledge his aberrations, it is difficult to criticise him properly. His unfortunate deficiency in humour hinders him from being an altogether popular poet; while those who are ordinarily attracted to poetry by some beauty of outward form feel no magnetic force in his studious restfulness of tone and his apparent want of lyric fire. On the other hand, those who admire him most incline too readily to the well-known theory that all his good poetry lies between 1798 and 1808; and Mr. John Morley, for instance, gives as his one exception to this rule the ode *Composed upon an Evening of extraordinary Splendour and Beauty*. The distaste which the one reader feels is a matter of temperament; the limits which the other imposes are justified by his scrupulous care for his author's reputation. In any case Wordsworth is the poet of the trained appreciation; he cannot be read without a certain amount of preparatory discipline. It is not given to all readers to look on life with so passionless a tranquillity. His command of the picturesque is at first sight a little pedantic; it suggests a hard and dogmatic attitude and nothing more; and we require time to discover the gift of phrase by which it is accompanied. With most students therefore he comes very gradually to his own; but the result of this slow process is that, while early enthusiasm for Scott or Byron generally decays, Wordsworth's attraction, if it has been felt once, increases with familiarity. His greatest admirers are ready to confess that he fell again and again into intolerable bathos without the least recognition of his fault; but this sin, which would have destroyed other poets, plays a very inconsiderable part in our final judgment of his merits. With

Conflicting theories as to Wordsworth's poetry.

Difficulties attending its study.

great poems like *The Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle*, with exquisite lyrics like *Yarrow Unvisited*, and with countless sonnets before us to plead for him, the indictment of *Peter Bell* and *Mr. Wilkinson's Spade* must simply be ruled out of court. The crudeness of *The Prelude* is sometimes harrowing, but there are single lines which compensate for the dulness of long passages, and its faults are forgotten in the remembrance of its virtues. The conclusion of the whole matter is that there are few more perfect poets than Wordsworth, few who have possessed so subtle a gift of phrase or have lifted themselves so far into the upper quiet above the tumult of earthly circumstances. Certainly no other has had the power of lifting his readers with him, of introducing them to the tranquillity of his haven of contemplation. This is the "healing power" which Matthew Arnold attributed to him, the peace of his poetry as compared with the continual strain of feverish excitement or the rapturous exaltation of other lyric poets.

Its peculiar virtues neutralise its defects.

The externals of his work, we have implied, bear too many signs of his quietism to attract the restless reader. Even the immortal poems which appeared in the two volumes of 1807, and justify the limitation of his very best work to a period between 1797 and 1801, seldom wear any but the most sober dress; while the work of his closing years is too often heavy and unattractive. Yet there is a certain graduation through which the proper point of view is attained. Such lyrics as the early *Remembrance of Collins* or the famous stanzas on the daffodils have a surface-beauty which is undeniable and striking; while there is nothing in them to disconnect or isolate them from their companions. In reading them we are little by little brought into touch with other poems which have less superficial beauty to recommend them; we learn to appreciate *Tintern Abbey* and the *Intimations of Immortality*; and these in their turn lead us to *The Prelude* and *The Excursion*, and those later poems in which Wordsworth, merging his sense of objective beauty in spiritual contemplation, became more and more abstract in thought. In these later pieces, to use the words of the late R. H. Hutton, "bald moralities tend to take the place of bald realities"; the fault of *Peter Bell* and *The Idiot Boy* is repeated in a different and less excusable way. Wordsworth's view of nature always had been inseparable from morality; and it was the natural result of all his tendencies that, as years went on, his philosophy should overpower his sense of the picturesque and assert itself almost exclusively. The sonnets on *The River Duddon* and, even more noticeably, *Yarrow Revisited*, are cases in point; and the real enjoyment of these poems represents, it may be said, the full achievement of success by the Wordsworthian student. The thorough appreciation of Wordsworth is, in most cases, an

Differences in his style and in his view of nature.

acquired taste; but, once acquired, it remains among the best of our possessions.

Wordsworth's sonnets.

There is one point in Wordsworth's poetry that claims our special attention—his use of the sonnet. This very difficult form of verse, which had almost died out with Milton, came naturally to Wordsworth. His earliest sonnet, written during his school days at Hawkshead, was certainly the most remarkable which had been written since the Restoration; and, although Wordsworth's own age was fertile in great sonnets, although a later generation produced a sonneteer of the first magnitude in Rossetti, no one has used the form so directly and so simply. Not all the sonnets of the enormous number are of equal merit; and the brilliant constellation of 1802, which includes *Westminster Bridge*, *The Venetian Republic*, *Toussaint l'Ouverture*, and "Milton! thou should'st be living at this hour," eclipses many of the rest, just as certain numbers of *The River Duddon* and the immortal *Departure of Sir Walter Scott* are superior to most things in the *Ecclesiastical Sonnets*. But, on the whole, there are few inequalities in the sonnets. Their form was eminently suited to Wordsworth's contemplative genius and adapted itself closely to his style; the result is that, as a body of work, they are the crowning example of the perfect inter-relation of his style and thought. He was not always successful in other forms, but here he was always at his best.

His position as the most vital influence in the romantic movement.

Finally, his place in the romantic movement has been sometimes contested. It has been said that he "was the child and not the father of a reaction, which, after all, has been greatly exaggerated." The romantic movement was a reaction only in a secondary sense; it brought Englishmen back to the proper appreciation of the older poets; while, on the other hand, it introduced them to a totally new aspect of nature. More than this, it put an end to a state of things which was pre-eminently reactionary; it delivered English verse from the chains in which it had languished all through the eighteenth century—chains from which no poet had totally escaped. But, reaction or no reaction, the father of the movement, its leader and omen-giver, was Wordsworth. He was not precisely the first person to rediscover nature: we must pay our eminent tribute to Burns and Cowper. He was not the first poet whose work fastened itself upon the public mind. Even of his own friends, the vastly inferior Southey met with earlier recognition; while there can be no question that the most striking of the *Lyrical Ballads* was Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*. His own theory of style received its negation in his own work and proved his greatest hindrance. But all these exceptions prove the rule that beneath the surface of his work lay a vital spark which was the perpetual security of the new poetry. Scott and Byron, with their popular appeal, would have

had a merely ephemeral reputation; their literary influence is now utterly lost. The immeasurable genius of Coleridge would, by itself, have produced little but a momentary effect, and would have left nothing but a dazzling memory. Shelley and Keats would have done something more than this; but they would not have altered the whole condition of the national literature. Briefly speaking, the vital centre of the whole company of poets who were the heralds of the nineteenth century is Wordsworth; his influence, working very slowly and quietly, permeates all succeeding literature. Its imperceptible operation has retarded its recognition; but there are few to-day who, looking on the stream of tendency in English poetry, would deny that Wordsworth is the cause of a quickening of its movement and a spreading of its waters; that, without this impetus, it would run in an uncertain and divided current; and that the spirit of the stream is to be found in the work of him who in every rivulet and grove recognised fully and for the first time an indwelling and vivifying soul uniting it to humanity.

§ 4. The life of SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE is at points almost indissoluble from the life of Wordsworth. He was born on October 21, 1772, at Ottery St. Mary, where his father was vicar and schoolmaster. The elder Coleridge was an eccentric being who wrote a Latin grammar and described the harmless necessary ablative case as the quale-quare-quidditive. He married twice; Samuel was the youngest of his large family, a precocious child, whose preoccupations were far beyond his age. Before he was ten years old Sir Francis Buller gave him a presentation to Christ's Hospital, where he remained for eight years, and was a schoolfellow of Charles Lamb. He was an unusual schoolboy, full of fancies and projects, burying himself at one time in medical studies and at another in metaphysical books, taking very little care of himself, and laying the foundations of subsequent complaints by swimming the New River in his clothes and forgetting to change. He read his classics well and became an accomplished scholar. However, the direction of his genius was more or less fixed by the study of two books—the translation of Plotinus by the sceptic Thomas Taylor, which had appeared in 1787, and the sonnets of William Lisle Bowles (1789). Bowles' work, not by any means an addition to the Valhalla of poetry, provoked his poetical enthusiasm above everything else; while the Neo-Platonic mysticism of Plotinus played a very conspicuous part in his intellectual history. He gradually worked his way through philosophical speculation to an irregular kind of Unitarianism, which he defined, so far as it was susceptible of definition, in *Biographia Literaria*. This represents his intellectual position when, in 1791, he went up to Jesus College, Cambridge. In 1793 he was a selected candidate for the Craven Scholarship,

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1772–1834).

Formation of opinions at school.

Eccentric career at Cambridge.

and his University life was generally creditable to his industry. However, he did not take his degree. His support of William Frend, a fellow of Jesus, who had defended Unitarian opinions, brought him into bad odour with the authorities. This, with the existence of some debts which he was unable to pay, led him to abscond from Cambridge at the end of 1793, and to hide himself by enlisting in the fifteenth dragoons under the assumed name of Cumberbatch. He wearied of his life in a very short time, and, being discovered by his friends, was discharged and went back to Cambridge in April, 1794. On his return he was admonished publicly by the Master of his college.

Meeting with Southey. The pantisocratic scheme, and life in Bristol.

The Long Vacation of 1794 filled his mind with new plans. He went for a few days to Oxford, and met Southey for the first time. The attraction seems to have been mutual. Coleridge possessed an extraordinary power over all who had the fortune to meet him. Among the talkers of the century his place is unique. Southey, on his side, was full of plans and aspirations which allured Coleridge. At the end of the summer, after a tour in North Wales with another friend, Coleridge went to Bristol and spent his time with Southey and a young man named Robert Lovell. This inexperienced trio not only wrote a joint play—*The Fall of Robespierre*, published at Cambridge in September, 1794, with the third act by Lovell removed, and one by Southey substituted—but even framed a social scheme. Their project was called by the dignified name of "pantisocracy"; its aim was the annihilation of selfishness, and its means a socialistic community whose home was to be on the banks of the Susquehanna. The friends provided themselves with wives for this eclectic scheme. Six Miss Frickers, the daughters of an unsuccessful maker of sugar-pans, resided at Bristol. Lovell was married to Mary Fricker, Southey was engaged to Edith, and Coleridge, who had already felt a passing tenderness for a young lady called Mary Evans, entered upon an unfortunate flirtation with a third, named Sara. Filled with dreams of love and the Susquehanna, he returned to Cambridge for the Michaelmas term. At the end of the year he was back in Bristol, making trial of pantisocracy in a small house where all were at their wits' end for money. The generous bookseller, Joseph Cottle, who cared for poetry more than profit, became the good angel of these unsatisfactory young men, and offered Coleridge thirty pounds for a volume of poems. Coleridge had not the temperament which helps its owner to work for his bread. The poems did not appear till 1796; meanwhile he lectured in Bristol on Unitarianism, the Susquehanna scheme, and the political depravity of William Pitt. His flirtation with Sara Fricker drifted on during 1795, until Southey and Cottle insisted on his marrying her. He had nothing to live upon; but Cottle promised him a guinea and

Marriage to Sara Fricker.

a half for every hundred lines he wrote after the completion of his volume of poems; and, assured of this competence, the couple were married at St. Mary Redcliffe, the church of Chatterton, on October 4, 1795, and went to live in the famous cottage at Clevedon, the rent of which was only five pounds a year. Southey was married a month later, and, to Coleridge's disgust, left pantisocracy where he had found it. During 1796, when Lovell died, the scheme was entirely given up.

Coleridge became gradually weary of his wife, and the unhappy marriage ended in complete estrangement. It must be remarked that the only person responsible for this state of things was Coleridge himself. There were four children of the marriage, the eldest of whom, Hartley, was born in September, 1796. They by this time removed to Kingsdown, a northern suburb of Bristol. Coleridge had spent the summer of the year in a journey from Bristol to Sheffield, seeking subscribers for a paper which he proposed to bring out. At Birmingham his conversation fascinated a young banker named Lloyd so much that he left his receipt of custom and became an inmate of Coleridge's household, accompanying it in the end of 1796 to its new home at Nether Stowey, where Coleridge found a kind friend in the tanner, Thomas Poole. Coleridge lived at Stowey for nearly two years. Here he was visited by Charles Lamb; here the Wordsworths came to settle; and here the most important work of his life was accomplished. If we associate Wordsworth and Coleridge with the Lakes, we find the earliest fount of their inspiration in the Quantocks. One November afternoon in 1797 the Wordsworths and Coleridge walked from Stowey to Watchet, the opening stage of the walking tour which was the first cause of the publication of *Lyrical Ballads*; and, on the way, *The Ancient Mariner* was planned, Coleridge relating the story, and his companions supplying suggestions. It was at Stowey, too, that he wrote *Christabel*; while *Kubla Khan*, as is well known, is a fragment recovered from a dream and written at a cottage between Porlock and Lynton. These three poems represent his influence on modern poetry; in addition to them, he wrote at Stowey, or in the neighbourhood, much of his metaphysical verse, the tragedy of *Osorio*, now known as *Remorse*, and the *Ode to the Nightingale*; this last poem and two scenes from *Osorio* appeared among the *Lyrical Ballads*.

At Nether Stowey. The origin of "Lyrical Ballads."

Coleridge left Stowey in September, 1798, and went to Germany. The origin of this change was the annuity of £150 which had been settled upon him by Josiah and Thomas Wedgwood on condition that he should give himself up to poetry and philosophy. Accordingly, he went abroad with the express purpose of studying the Kantian metaphysics. For the first part of his journey he was with the Wordsworths; but their roads lay in different directions, and he went by himself to Ratzeburg, where

Life in Germany and London.

he lived in a pastor's house and applied himself thoroughly to the language. In 1799 he attended lectures at Göttingen, returning to England at midsummer. The Wordsworths were now gone to Grasmere, where he paid them a visit; and Stowey had few attractions. His admirer, Lloyd, had gone back to Birmingham after sowing the seeds of a temporary quarrel between Coleridge and Lamb. During his own absence abroad his second son, a baby of eight months, had died; his family now consisted of his wife and a small boy between two and three years old. His movements during 1799 and 1800 were uncertain, but for the most part he was in London, working in his desultory and brilliant fashion for Stuart's *Morning Post*. In July, 1800, the Coleridges went to Keswick, where they occupied one half of a double house called Greta Hall. Southey came to live in the other half during the next year, and, in process of time, united the houses. For, after 1800, the life of Coleridge severs itself from his contemporaries and ordinary surroundings. Although two more children were born to him in 1800 and 1802, he became entirely estranged from his wife, and rambled aimlessly about England and the Continent, leaving his friends in ignorance of his address, heartlessly casting the whole burden of his household on the overworked Southey, and living on the charity of the Wedgwoods and of casual admirers like De Quincey. Moreover, the habit of opium-eating had fastened itself on him and thoroughly weakened his character and resolution; naturally sluggish and unbusiness-like, he exaggerated his faults by this fatal practice. It is certain that he took opium, not for his own pleasure, but for the alleviation of pain; he seems to have suffered from a general debility of constitution, the cause of which, at his death, was undiscoverable. In 1802 he visited North Wales with his patron Thomas Wedgwood, and in 1803 he went with the Wordsworths to Scotland. At the end of the same year he started for Madeira in search of health, but went no further than Malta, where he became secretary to the governor, Sir Alexander Ball. In the autumn of 1805 he visited Italy, where, as a journalist inimical to Napoleon, he incurred the risk of summary methods at the Emperor's hands; eventually, as he was sailing home, he threw his papers into the sea in his fear of pursuit. His return took place in August, 1806, when he paid a brief visit to Keswick. In 1807 he met De Quincey at Bristol, and attracted him as he had already attracted so many others. His young admirer sent him, through Joseph Cottle, an anonymous present of £300. In spite of his personal fascination, Coleridge seemed doomed to hopeless failure. His lectures at the Royal Institution were a fiasco; his manner was most unequal; and, when the hour of the lecture drew nigh, the lecturer sometimes could be found nowhere, and had to be excused lamely by his friends. Similarly, in 1809–10, while

Removal to Keswick.

Travels in the Mediterranean.

Erratic life from 1807 *to* 1816.

he was living for a time on the hospitality of the Wordsworths at Grasmere, he started an unsuccessful paper called *The Friend*, which was printed at Penrith, lasted from an autumn to a spring, and then dropped out of the ranks of periodicals. From Grasmere he went to London, where, during the subsequent winter, he wrote irregularly for *The Courier*, and delivered those famous lectures on Shakespeare which are the source of modern Shakespearean criticism. Meanwhile he was drawing the Wedgwood pension. Thomas Wedgwood had died in 1806; Josiah, who continued the annuity, became gradually dissatisfied with the industry of his *protégé*, and in 1811 deprived him of this support. Coleridge appears to have found a refuge with a friend called Morgan, who lived in London, and afterwards at Calne in Wiltshire; but, during 1813–14 he was certainly in Bristol, where he made an abject confession of his opium-eating to Cottle, and was treated for it by a certain Dr. Daniel. Early in 1813 Byron procured a stage for *Remorse* at Drury Lane; otherwise, between 1811 and 1816, literary history is silent as to Coleridge, unless a few casual lectures at Bristol are an exception.

Settlement with the Gillmans, and publications.

In 1816, however, this errant recovered some of his self-respect, which had been grievously wounded in the years of his vagrancy. Home was no longer possible for him; but he found his asylum with a family called Gillman, who lived at Highgate. These kind people took charge of him, and he lived with them till his death, eighteen years later. His last lectures were given in 1818, when he was at last a great and famous person. In 1816 Murray published *Christabel*—which had been long familiar to poets in its manuscript—*Kubla Khan*, and *The Pains of Sleep*. The same year saw *The Statesman's Manual*, the first of the lay sermons; in 1817 these were followed by *Zapolya*, the book of poems called *Sibylline Leaves*, the *Biographia Literaria*, and the *Second Lay Sermon*. The *Aids to Reflection* appeared in 1825, the *Constitution of Church and State* in 1830, and, after his death, from 1835 to 1853, a series of remains came out, the chief of which were the *Lectures on Shakespeare* (1849). Once more, in 1828, Coleridge went abroad and visited the Rhine with the Wordsworths. Six years after, on July 25, 1834, he died. He was survived by his unfortunate wife, his two sons, Hartley and Derwent, and his daughter Sara.

Death.

Shapeless state of Coleridge's work.

§ 5. Coleridge's life, with its indifference to logical coherency, its interrupted energies, and its altogether unsatisfactory complexion, is the key to his work. One finds it very difficult to believe that, had the current of his genius been ordered otherwise, he would not have occupied the foremost position in the literature of his century. His poetry is, as a general rule, anything but first-rate; but he wrote at least three poems which are not only among the very

finest things in English, but have had an incalculable influence on modern poetry. His prose style is pure and dignified, and its matter is of inestimable value. Deeply tinged as he was with foreign influence, he was the foremost English critic of his day, and did much to restore the balance of literary appreciation in England. Nevertheless, his work is chaotic and disordered; it pursues no regular plan; it is destitute of the sense of arrangement. He has decreed his stately pleasure-dome, but he has not built it; and all that we see is a mass of material, the unhewn and the carved lying together in extraordinary confusion, here and there a fragment worked to perfection and then cast aside to take its casual place in the strange heap. A book of prose essays like the *Biographia Literaria* is a sample of the rest—the continuous history of the growth of intellect, broken by digressions and scraps of humorous biography, and supplemented by a vivacious series of letters of travel. It is incurably amorphous, a history which has involuntarily become a miscellany.

Contrast between the temperaments of Coleridge and Wordsworth. Coleridge's versatility.

We can see nowhere that steady purpose with which men like Wordsworth write, forming their poetry into a complete architectural scheme, giving it a shape and detail. Coleridge's remains are monuments of a singular versatility, of an intellect too quick to be altogether stable. He did not submit, like Wordsworth, to the gradual change which turned a Republican into a cautious Conservative, nor to the pantheistic conviction which co-existed with Wordsworth's orthodoxy. He was at first a violent Republican and a fervent Unitarian, or, as he preferred to call himself, a "psilanthropist"; then he passed through various stages of metaphysical belief and doubt; and finally, by a curious metamorphosis, decided that Conservatism and the Church of England were best. Although this transition is superficially identical with Wordsworth's progress, no two things could be more different. With Wordsworth, religion was a natural quality which gave a sacred flame to his young political enthusiasm and, when the heat of his youth was over, directed him to more temperate courses. Coleridge, on the other hand, was incapable of this steadfast and austere piety; he was a religious enthusiast at every period of his life, whether orthodox or heterodox; he was enchanted by passing impressions and sudden dreams in which he ate honey-dew and drank the milk of Paradise over and over again and in every variety of form. New shapes constantly presented themselves before him, fresh manifestations of old ideas mingling with inspirations that seemed to spring up like newly-lit lamps along the road of unknown thought. It was impossible that this visionary should remain, until failing health had curbed his fancy, firm in one orthodoxy, or that a transcendentalist so free from canons and organised schemes of thought should be faithful for long to one system of philosophy. Coleridge is one of those of whom it is written, "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel."

Nevertheless, in the period following his marriage, when he seems to have had some settled work in view, he achieved some things of surpassing excellence. There is a great deal of his poetry which may, with a safe conscience, be left unread. He wrote a great deal of glib blank verse which reads as well as much of Cowper, but is totally uncharacteristic of himself—verse into which he thrust his philosophical enthusiasm at a very early age. Nor do his tragedies repay close study. *Wallenstein* (1800) is merely an example of the art of first-rate translation; *Remorse* contains Elizabethan reminiscences and some sentimentality besides that is not Elizabethan; *The Fall of Robespierre* may be dismissed as no better than most *juvenilia*. Above these stand such pieces as the *Ode to France*, the *Hymn before Sunrise in the Valley of Chamouni*, the *Ode in Dejection*, and others of the same character; these take their place beside the majority of good but not first-rate poems; they are memorable without containing anything to warrant a striking immortality. The lyric called *Love*, familiar to most readers as an exquisite piece of harmony and imagery, has a little niche all to itself. But, when all is said and done, *The Ancient Mariner*, *Christabel*, and *Kubla Khan* remain the three individual, unsurpassable poems of Coleridge. *Kubla Khan*, of these, is utterly distinct; it is the creation of a day-dream; it has neither ancestry nor descendants. Typical, in its incompleteness, of Coleridge's whole work, it is at the same time his most masterly experiment in metre, a wonderfully varied harmony of sensuous beauty in whose enjoyment the ear supplies without any effort the power of sight. The almost miraculous circumstances under which the poem was written—if we accept them—account in some degree for its effect; there is certainly no other poem in English which calls up the external character of scenery more vividly or minutely. Coleridge's relation to his landscape was more definitely accentuated than Wordsworth's. He felt the physical, objective, beauty of nature with a far greater force; while at the same time his perception of its mystic meaning gained in imagination what it lost in the absence of dogmatism. In *The Ancient Mariner* we have the perfect union of this concrete love of beauty and this pervading, unregulated sense of the supernatural. The kindling influence of the poem on the æsthetic, Pre-Raffaellite school of art and poetry in our own day cannot be doubted. The picture of the ship dropping "below the kirk, below the hill, below the lighthouse-top" is as precise and minute in detail as an early painting by Ford Madox Brown; there is withal the very same element of the unknown and the unreal in it, suggested by the hand, not of an apt and brilliant pupil, but of a great master. The ship sails out of reality into seas of grim imagination; every succeeding verse unfolds a new picture, in which there ever

Classification of Coleridge's poems.

"Kubla Khan."

"The Ancient Mariner."

resides the same mystery, increasing and changing its form continually.

And, while the poem owes so much of its force to sensuous imagination and the imminence of the supernatural, its melody also has something—and that not a little—to do with its charm. It often has been said that Coleridge, like Spenser, is a poet's poet: and it is beyond question that his metrical sway over his contemporaries was sovereign. The measure to which *The Ancient Mariner* is set, passing through so many variations and wedding its cadences so completely to its subject, was a new thing in English. Never since the days of the great Elizabethan lyrists had metre been used so flexibly and freely. *The Ancient Mariner* was not merely ballad-poetry; it was poetry which, taking the form of the ballad, used it to convey a subtle harmony hitherto unknown to experience. In this respect *The Ancient Mariner* is beyond criticism. The artful simplicity of phrase and music, the constant change of time, the loosely-strewn yet meditated arrangement of syllables—these point to the work of an artist who guided himself instinctively to the inevitable word and knew the inevitable musical phrase with which to express it. *The Ancient Mariner* was the first sign of a revolution in English prosody. *Christabel*, however, was a more immediately powerful factor of change. The unfinished poem had lain in manuscript for eighteen years, very nearly as long as *Peter Bell*. In the meantime, however, it had been widely circulated and had given the principal suggestion for the metre of Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel* and for Byron's early poems; in fact, the popular narrative poetry of the generation had borrowed its form almost entirely from this strange tale in verse. *Christabel* is literally nothing but a splendid piece of poetry clothed in the perfection of metrical form, a glittering masterpiece of style. There is no very definite story to take up the reader's interest, no great individuality about the personages; the poet means to convey no moral; but he has strung together a set of lines which follow one another in ringing succession, with reminiscent suggestions of other and stranger harmonies lingering about their course. It is only by effects such as this that a poet catches the ear of his own generation, and it is certainly on these that the final judgment of Coleridge rests. Wordsworth's part in the romantic movement was to enlarge the boundaries of thought, to remove the veil of formality which hung between man and nature. Coleridge gave to this broader sphere its new music; to the intellectual side of the movement he gave its concrete beauty. It is not a beauty which attracts everybody; there are doubtless many to whom its subtlety is a little repellent; but, of succeeding poets, there is scarcely one—certainly none of any note—who, consciously or unconsciously, has not sought some ideal very like the standard of *The Ancient Mariner* and *Christabel*. Of one from whom both Scott and

Obligations of poetry to "The Ancient Mariner" and "Christabel."

Byron borrowed so largely it is not amiss to say that he was the creator of modern melody.

Of Coleridge's prose works, the *Lectures on Shakespeare* are deservedly the most famous. The chief point, as we already have said, in which the romantic movement was reactionary, was the great affection felt by all its members to the writers of the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and especially to the great dramatists. Coleridge, in his later years, turned eagerly to the study of the old English divines; and the results of his research are to be found in the *Aids to Reflection* and the posthumous *Notes on English Divines* (1853). But the love of his earlier life was Shakespeare. It is almost superfluous to point out the change of taste which he inaugurated in this direction. English criticism had never been silent on the subject of Shakespeare; the two distinguished men of letters who ruled the first and second halves of the eighteenth century both had attempted to edit a poet who sinned against every canon of their literary creed. The admiration of Shakespeare in that uncongenial age closely resembled patronage; there was always present a certain condescension *de haut en bas*, the natural and ill-concealed inability of trained songsters to appreciate the native wood-notes wild of this warbler and the consequent tendency to insist exclusively on their wildness. Coleridge was the first man who, standing on the assumption that Shakespeare was the greatest genius that ever existed, proved him also the greatest artist. It is true that the defenders of Germany as the native place of true Shakespearean criticism can very easily find an abundant supply of German transcendentalism and metaphysic in Coleridge's lectures; but the fact remains that the Germans, with all their admiration and painstaking study of Shakespeare, have never before or since produced a Shakespearean critic of like genius, and that it was impossible that any country but Shakespeare's own should do so. The premises and proofs of Coleridge are now common axioms. In other respects his critical powers were as astonishing. His *Literary Remains* (1836-8) contain an immense number of casual remarks taken from his note-books, the margins of books, and his table-talk, most of them worth their weight in gold. His inclination to philosophy makes him the critic of the few; he is harder to read than Lamb or Hazlitt, who appreciated the purely literary side of their subject so much more; whether he is the greatest of the three or not, it is impossible to determine where all are so great. While they discovered early dramatists and set the estimate of Elizabethan literature on a new footing, he turned to the apotheosis of the greatest figure of that age and rested on that task his highest claims as a prose-writer. Yet, although the best he did in prose is contained in these fragmentary lectures, the student of his prose work may well go on from them to read *The*

Coleridge's prose.

His place among Shakespearean critics.

His place as a general critic.

Friend, the *Aids to Reflection*, the *Lay Sermons*, and the *Biographia Literaria*. Just as no note in *Christabel* or *The Ancient Mariner* can be lightly missed, so in these books there are few sentences which do not contain some judgment worthy of meditation, something that, extending our comprehension alike of natural and moral beauty, contributes to the growth of a catholic taste. It is by no means Coleridge's least distinction that he was certainly the first English critic who sympathised with the literature of all periods, and showed himself capable of admiring one school of writers without denying his appreciation to others.

§ 6. ROBERT SOUTHEY, whose name is traditionally associated with those of Wordsworth and Coleridge, was the son of a linen-draper in Wine Street, Bristol. This tradesman had made a genteel marriage; and his wife had a half-sister who lived in easy circumstances at Bath. Southey spent his childhood at this aunt's house, showing a certain precocity from his earliest years. He made the acquaintance of every actor of merit who came to Bristol or Bath, and became fixed in his aunt's persuasion that there was only one thing grander than being a great tragic actor, and that was to be a great author of tragedies. At first he went to school in a small way at the village of Corston and at Bristol, but at fourteen he was sent to Westminster. He had never received any classical education; and this defect, felt seriously at school, was never repaired. When he had been at Westminster for four years he was expelled on account of an article which he had written in *The Flagellant*, a magazine started by himself and his schoolfellow Grosvenor Bedford; and accordingly, on presenting himself for entrance at Christ Church, he was rejected by the dons. However, his uncle Herbert Hill, who was British chaplain at Lisbon, helped him to enter at Balliol instead. His Oxford career was not very brilliant. He made some attempt to read the classics, and succeeded in reading Epictetus, took athletic exercise, and began to write *Joan of Arc* on the plan of a revolutionary epic. Meanwhile he was forming no schemes for the future. His religious opinions, which had been kindled by the French Revolution, prevented him from taking the obvious course of Holy Orders and so assisting his family; and, during this period, he was attacked by despondency. In the summer of 1794 Coleridge appeared at Oxford and met Southey, whose despair was a little alleviated by the pantisocratic scheme. Coleridge converted him to Unitarianism for the time being; and, going down from Oxford without taking a degree, he went back to Bristol and before very long became engaged to Miss Edith Fricker. Then came the arrival of Coleridge and the discussion of ideal schemes in their common lodgings—a life lasting, as we have seen, till the end of 1795. Unfortunately Southey, although without a father, was not

ROBERT SOUTHEY (1774–1843).

At Westminster and Oxford.

Life at Bristol.

so free from family ties as Coleridge, and had relations to please; and his aunt, Miss Tyler, on hearing of his radical schemes, would have nothing more to do with him. The bookseller, Cottle, who was so excellent a friend to the struggling poets, although, by the publication of his *Early Recollections* (1837), he did enough to destroy the closest ties of gratitude, came to Southey's aid at this point and offered him fifty pounds for *Joan of Arc*. The offer showed more enthusiasm than experience. Southey had already published a small volume of poems (1795) and, while he corrected his Oxford epic for publication, he lectured on history at Bristol. He was often unable to pay for his dinner, and in 1795 was compelled by want to return to his mother's house. In November 1795 his uncle invited him to Lisbon. He had no other alternative than to cast pantisocracy behind his back and go; but on the very morning of his departure he went quietly to St. Mary Redcliffe and was there married to Miss Fricker. *Marriage and departure for Portugal.* He went to Portugal by himself and remained there till 1797. The result of his travels was a little book of *Letters* upon the Peninsula and the accumulation of a great deal of knowledge of Spanish and Portuguese history. On his return to England he entered upon that life of patient literary toil from which he never swerved till his health and intellect left him. Like Wordsworth and Coleridge, he became at once the pensionary of a rich friend, Charles Wynn, who had been his schoolfellow at Westminster. His pension, however, he relinquished when he thought that he needed it no longer (1806), but received, through Wynn's influence, an equivalent pension from the Government. In spite of his talents and industry he was constantly on the verge of poverty; and his philosophy and optimism were not always proof against the difficulties of his position. The additional charge which fell on his shoulders after Coleridge had deserted his family overburdened him terribly as years went on. From 1797 to 1803 he moved about with his wife, settling for a short time in Wiltshire and afterwards in Hampshire, taking his wife to Portugal, and returning in 1801 to begin his life at Keswick. In the same year, however, he went over to Ireland as secretary to Isaac Corry, the Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer, and was in Bristol during 1802, when his mother and infant daughter both died. In 1803 he went finally to Greta Hall, Keswick, which became his home for forty years. He had finished *Thalaba* in Portugal and had published it in London (1801). *Unremitting industry.* *Life at Keswick. Publications.* At Greta Hall he studied chivalric romances, translated *Amadis of Gaul* (1803) and wrote *Madoc* (1805). *Amadis* soon received a companion in *Palmerin of England* (1807), which appeared in the same year with a number of other minor works, and was followed by the beautiful version of *The Chronicle of the Cid* (1808). The ambitious *Curse of Kehama*

was published in 1810, and at nearly the same time Southey brought out the first volume of his *History of Brazil* (1810–19), which was intended to form part of a gigantic history of Portugal.

The Laureate, Pye, died in 1813, and Southey succeeded to his dignity. The *Life of Nelson* came out in 1813; *Roderick, the Last of the Goths* was produced during the next year; two years later an additional sorrow fell upon Southey in the death of his son Herbert. The radical convictions of his earlier years had undergone in process of time a complete change. He was incapable of looking at controversial questions impartially, and turned so completely and violently upon his youthful opinions that he was by no means a *persona grata* with liberals and dissenters. Some of his enemies had their revenge upon him in bringing out a piratical edition of *Wat Tyler*, a play of his Oxford days. This annoyance roused him to controversy with William Smith, the Nonconformist member for Norwich. During this decade of his life he was working for the *Quarterly*, for which he had begun to write in 1808, at Scott's instance. His contributions were very voluminous, but he made very little mark as a critic. In 1820 he received his D.C.L. degree from Oxford and published his *Life of Wesley*; in 1821 he wrote the ridiculous and ill-advised *Vision of Judgment*; in 1823 he began to publish his *History of the Peninsular War*, which was continued till 1834; and in 1824 he supplemented his constant defence of the Church of England, which had been the subject of many of his *Quarterly* articles, by *The Book of the Church*, a very lucid if not impartial history. In 1826 he entered Parliament as member for the Wiltshire borough of Downton; but he seems to have been elected without his knowledge, and had certainly very little taste for representing even so scanty a body of constituents. His daughter Isabel died in the same year. Between 1829 and 1835 his publications were very frequent, including lives of Bunyan (1830), of Cowper (1833), of the British Admirals (1833-40) in Lardner's Cabinet Cyclopædia, the ballads called *All for Love* and *The Pilgrim of Compostella* (1829), the *Sir Thomas More, or Colloquies on Society* (1829), which was scourged rather heavily by Macaulay in the *Edinburgh*, and the beginning of the miscellany called *The Doctor* (1834-7). Peel granted him a pension of £300 in 1835, and offered him a baronetcy, which he declined. Two years after this accession of fortune a heavy misfortune befell him in the death of his wife, to whom he had been married for forty-two years. She had been out of her mind for some time before her death. Her husband's intellect did not long survive her; incipient softening of the brain was already setting in. In 1839 he sought some comfort for his declining years in marrying Caroline Bowles, a Hampshire lady only twelve years

Made Laureate. Change of political opinions.

Later years, second marriage, and death.

younger than himself, who, twenty years before, had been encouraged by Kirke White to submit her poetry to the Laureate's criticism, and had become since then one of his regular correspondents. The marriage excited and enfeebled him; and from 1839 to 1843 he lived in a kind of coma, hardly able to recognise any of his family. On March 21, 1843, he died of a chill and consequent fever. He was buried at his parish church of Crosthwaite. Memorials were erected to him there, in Bristol Cathedral, and in Westminster Abbey. His widow, who had been regarded with aversion by her stepchildren, retired to her home at Lymington, where she died in 1854.

Southey's work: its voluminous character.

§ 7. When it is remembered that the published writings of Southey amount to one hundred and nine volumes, that he contributed to *The Annual Review* fifty-two articles, to *The Foreign Quarterly* three, and to the *Quarterly* ninety-four, it will be seen that he did a prodigious amount of work during his life. The mere work of composition was a small part of the labour which these all involved; they are all, even to his poems, books of research which obliged him to consult numerous volumes for the production of one. It is true, generally speaking, that his fame rests upon his poetry, and that to many the Southey who wrote the *Life of Nelson* seems nothing more than a distant connection of the poet Southey. In both prose and poetry, however, he has met with a fate which too often befalls the man who lives by literature and reads in order to write. His prose style was perfectly smooth and spontaneous; he wrote English with hardly an effort, and takes his place among writers of classic prose; he had learning and the gift of accuracy, with the art of making his facts interesting; and yet, with the exception of the *Life of Nelson*, his books rest in the limbo of forgotten narratives. It is possible, as it is but just, to praise his prose cordially; the appreciation which we can give to his poetry must be infinitely more limited. His inevitable place beside Wordsworth and Coleridge is a biographical accident; he is at the opposite pole of poetry. His epics are excellent and voluminous narratives; where, like *Joan of Arc* and *Madoc*, they are in blank verse, they move along easily and melodiously, and prove above everything else that their author had a quick ear. In *Thalaba* there is more imagination; but the unrhymed system of metre is a serious annoyance. *The Curse of Kehama* contains some of the best poetry of all; but it is unfortunately a poem which must be read for the sake of its story; and, as the story is unreal and tedious, the reader cannot trust to this fatal *point d'appui*. Both these Oriental poems contain imagination, whose place is too often taken by erudition. Learned detail, which happens at the same time to be correct, is a terrible snare to the young; and *Thalaba* and *Kehama*, if discovered by the

His prose style.

Defects of his poetry.

schoolboy, interest and enchant him. Macaulay, among the liberal items of knowledge with which he supplied the "fourth-form schoolboy," gave him credit for an acquaintance with the Domdaniel cavern. This intimacy, when begun so early, is closer than it will again be found in after-life. Arabian heroes like Thalaba who fight with terrible enchanters, Indian families surrounded, as in *The Curse of Kehama*, by the supernatural spells of an intricate mythology, Welshmen like Madoc who visit Mexico in the twelfth century, even the Gothic Roderick in the midst of his crimes and punishment, need something more than correct detail to make their appeal to the older student. The quality which is wanting in all Southey's more ambitious work is the essential quality of poetry; and it was precisely his freedom from this necessary equipment of the poet that made him so good a prose writer. The percentage of people who read Southey's poetry at all is very small. Everybody has heard of *Blenheim*, if only through the medium of a book of selections, and most people who have read Byron's *Vision of Judgment* know that Southey beatified the memory of George III in indifferent hexameters and a style of adulation of which no other Laureate, however imbecile, had been guilty. The decline of a poet who never commanded great popularity is only to be expected. Coleridge said of *The Curse of Kehama* that it was a work "of great talent, but not of much genius"; and this is the exact explanation of its author's later obscurity. On the other hand, this great talent was quite enough for the *Life of Nelson*. That admirable little book, the model of biography where it assumes the form of narrative, has become a national possession which no more critical life of the great hero can supersede. The *History of Brazil* is seldom consulted, while the *History of the Peninsular War* is superfluous beside Napier's; the *Life of Wesley* and *The Book of the Church* have a controversial bitterness which sits ill on them, and has destroyed their reputation, but they are both masterpieces of their kind; while in *The Doctor* and the *Table-Talk* we catch the vigorous reflection of Southey's mind and scholarly humour. However, if the stigma of inferiority must rest upon Southey, if his name survives chiefly because he was the friend of Wordsworth and the brother-in-law of Coleridge, if it is a name which has the doubtful honour of being universally known while its legitimate claim to reputation is generally forgotten, it must be remembered that Southey did a quiet service to the romantic movement, not merely in his minor poems—occasional lyrics like "My days among the Dead are passed"—but in his study and translation of the medieval romances. *Amadis of Gaul* and *Palmerin of England* find, it may be, a scanty public and a sympathy not much greater than they found from Don Quixote's housekeeper and the curate; but they were

Contrast between his poetry and prose.

Service of his scholarship to literature.

definite and valuable contributions to that enlargement of medieval scholarship which was going on in England at this time; and the *Chronicle of the Cid*, while there are very few translations as good, is one of those books which, like Scott's *Border Minstrelsy* and Lamb's *Dramatic Poets*, are the classic monuments of the sound learning that attended on the spread of the romantic movement and increased its magic influence by their scholarly testimony.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE POETS OF THE ROMANTIC MOVEMENT.

II. BYRON, SHELLEY, KEATS, ETC.

§ 1. Life of LORD BYRON. § 2. His early work: its popularity and revolutionary influence. § 3. Byron's satires: *English Bards*; *Beppo*; *The Vision of Judgment*; *Don Juan*. § 4. His dramas. Summary of characteristics. § 5. PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY: his life. § 6. His lyric genius; influence of scholarship on his work; methods of appreciating Shelley. § 7. JOHN KEATS. Life. § 8. Contrast with Shelley; peculiar character of Keats' poetry; its place in the pedigree of verse. § 9. Life of THOMAS MOORE. § 10. Classification of his poetry. § 11. SAMUEL ROGERS and THOMAS CAMPBELL. Unprogressive character of their work.

§ 1. EVEN in our own day, when the general knowledge of English literature is so much wider than it ever has been, there survives in the rest of Europe a tradition that Byron was the greatest poet of the romantic movement. It is well known that his sudden popularity effaced Scott's claims to this reputation and lasted, in spite of scandal, until his death; that his romantic life, his wild adventures, and his gallant self-sacrifice in the cause of Greek independence, have given his poetry additional glory; and that his influence upon the Continent is still almost as great as it was half a century and more ago. GEORGE GORDON NOEL, sixth LORD BYRON, was born in Holles Street, Cavendish Square, on January 22, 1788. His father, a nephew of the fifth Lord, was an army captain and an unprincipled profligate, who had married a Scotch heiress, Catherine Gordon of Gicht. This lady, Captain Byron's second wife, was the mother of the poet. Her temper was passionate and uncontrolled, her caprices so violent and sudden as to reach the limit of insanity; when she lost her temper she railed like a fishwife and chased her son, whom she had been caressing a moment before, round the room; she addressed him on one occasion as a "lame beast," and, in a quarrel, threw the poker and tongs at him. Her death was eventually caused by her rage at an upholsterer's bill. It is obvious that Byron's early surroundings were of a very unfortunate kind. His father had dissipated the fortune which

LORD BYRON (1788–1824).

Parentage and childhood.

Miss Gordon had brought him, and she was obliged to retire to a lodging in Aberdeen, where she maintained herself and her son on an income of £150. Thus Byron was left entirely to her control. He inherited from her an almost morbid susceptibility, which was aggravated by her alternate fondling and abuse; and it seems that, during the first ten years of his life, the only antidote to his mother's hysterical mismanagement was supplied by his nurse, May Gray. His beauty as a boy was remarkable; his head with its curly hair and magnificent profile was one which sculptors loved to model; but, from his birth, he had a serious malformation in one of his feet which precluded him from walking any distance, and, although he managed to conceal it from obvious notice, enormously increased his painful self-consciousness. During these years he went to school at Aberdeen, first with a private tutor, afterwards at the grammar school of the city. His father died at Valenciennes in 1791, not without suspicion of suicide; his cousin, the heir to the Byron peerage, died in 1794, leaving him the succession. In 1798 the death of the "wicked Lord Byron" brought him the title and the family mansion at Newstead. He became a ward in chancery and was placed under the guardianship of Lord Carlisle. Newstead was in a dilapidated condition and the property was heavily encumbered. Mrs. Byron accordingly went to live in Nottingham and engaged a private tutor for her son, whom she sent in the next year to a school at Dulwich. Eventually, in 1801, he went to Harrow and stayed there for four years. Although recourse to quacks and physicians had made his foot worse instead of better, he distinguished himself in athletic exercises, played cricket against Eton, and learned to swim. His revolutionary spirit was shown in the childish mutiny in which he took part after the election of Dr. Butler to the head-mastership. His friendships were violent and romantic, and he had declared his love for three of his cousins before he left Harrow. For one of them, Mary Anne Chaworth, who was married in 1805 to a Nottinghamshire squire called Musters, he retained a somewhat factitious affection, but the lady seems never to have returned his passion. This *affaire de cœur* went on during his holidays in Nottinghamshire, spent sometimes at Newstead, which had been taken for the time by Lord Grey de Ruthin, and, from 1804 to 1807, at the charming country town of Southwell. Burgage Manor, on the slopes which overlook the town, became his home for three years. He made a number of friends, but did not mix very much in the county society, preferring the company of Becher, one of the priest-vicars of Southwell Minster, and of a young medical student named Pigot, for whose sister he conceived a desultory fancy. Meanwhile he had left Harrow—which he had hated at first—with great regret, and had gone up to Trinity College, Cambridge. Here he made his mark as an eccentric, formed

Life in Nottinghamshire, at Harrow, and at Cambridge.

several friendships, including his lifelong association with John Cam Hobhouse, afterwards Lord Broughton, and distinguished himself by posing as an atheist and by several juvenile freaks. His first volume of poetry was published by a Newark bookseller named Ridge, in 1806. Becher criticised one of the pieces unfavourably. Byron recalled and burned all the copies of the edition on which he could lay his hands, and set to work at a revision. An intermediate edition appeared early in 1807; but, in its final form, published in the summer, the book was called *Hours of Idleness* and bore its author's name.

"Hours of Idleness" (1807) and its sequel.

This little book of autobiographical verses—for the most part reminiscences of Nottinghamshire, Harrow, and Cambridge—wanted poetical value, but was no worse than the juvenile productions of most poets. However, *The Edinburgh Review*, probably attracted to the work of destruction by the writer's rank, published a scathing criticism of the book. The critic was almost certainly Brougham, who was then studying for the English bar in London. While the judgment of the *Edinburgh* was quite correct in essentials, its incidental violence was unpardonable, and the personal injury which it inflicted upon Byron had a lasting result on his character. This was in January, 1808. In the same year he took his Master's degree at Cambridge and went to live at Newstead, vaunting his cynicism and scandalising the countryside by his house-parties of college friends and by puerile orgies which obtained a reputation more serious than the fact. His misanthropy was increased by the coldness with which, on coming of age, he was received in the House of Lords. His guardian, Lord Carlisle, shrank from introducing him, and he was accompanied to the House only by an obscure family connection named Dallas, who was a would-be poet. This accumulation of circumstances made him an Ishmael. In March, 1809, appeared his very clever satire, *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, a hybrid imitation of Juvenal and Pope, in which he attacked not only his guardian and his critical aggressors, but almost all the literary men of the day, including the generous Scott.

"English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" (1809).

In July the young satirist, accompanied by Hobhouse, went on his travels, and remained abroad for almost exactly two years. He visited Portugal and Spain, sailed from Gibraltar to Malta, where he met Mrs. Spencer Smith, the Florence of *Childe Harold*, and then, landing at Prevesa in September, spent the autumn and early winter in wandering through Acarnania and the Morea. He arrived at Athens on Christmas Eve and remained there for three months in the house of Madame Macri, whose daughter Theresa inspired the famous *Maid of Athens*. In March, 1810, he left Athens for the Troad; on May 3 he performed his famous achievement of swimming the Hellespont; from May 14 to July 14 he was at Constantinople; and then, after a temporary

Travels on the Continent.

visit to Athens, he made another journey in the Morea and caught a fever at Patras. The winter found him once more at Athens, installed in the Capuchin convent, writing two more satires in Pope's couplet—*Hints from Horace* and *The Curse of Minerva* (1812)—and beginning *Childe Harold*. Finally, he revisited Malta and came back to England. His mother died in August. In October he took rooms in St. James' Street, and in March and April, 1812, made his two speeches in the House of Lords. But already, in February, Murray had published the first two cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, an account of Byron's own foreign travels; and the fashionable world, feeling their sentimental attraction, had begun to court its new idol. From 1812 to 1816 he was certainly what he called himself in *Don Juan*, "the grand Napoleon of the realms of rhyme"; he had the entry of every drawing-room, and all the ladies who set the mode ran after him. The passion which Lady Caroline Lamb, wife of the future Lord Melbourne, felt for him was on his side little more than a violent flirtation; the lady, however, never recovered from it, and his last unfeeling letter to her seems to have deranged a naturally weak mind. *Childe Harold* was followed very rapidly by the famous series of romantic tales in verse. *The Giaour*, dedicated to Rogers, was published in May 1813, simultaneously with *Rokeby*, and inflicted the fatal blow on Scott's popularity as a poet. In December *The Bride of Abydos* followed, and immediately after (January, 1814) came *The Corsair*. This last book was dedicated to Moore, who had begun his acquaintance with a challenge to Byron and had afterwards become his warmest friend. In the preface Byron spoke of *The Corsair* as the last of his poems for some years; but in August he brought out a further tale, *Lara*, which was published in one volume with Rogers' *Jacqueline*. In January, 1815, the *Hebrew Melodies* appeared with music by Braham and Nathan; a year later *The Siege of Corinth*, not the least powerful of these fervent torrents of narrative, was published with a dedication to Hobhouse; and in February, 1816, this was followed by *Parisina*, dedicated to his Cambridge friend, Scrope Berdmore Davies. It should be kept in mind that during this epoch of brilliant productiveness, Byron, in spite of his follies and vanity, had lost that tone of bitter cynicism which he had affected at Newstead. His early friends had died, one after another, in 1811, and those who were left were his wisest counsellors. He had repented long before of his indiscriminate rancour in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. In 1815 he met Scott, whom he had attacked so unreasonably, at Murray's, and each poet was attracted by the other. Byron's admiration of Scott is shown by the inscription, "To the monarch of Parnassus," written in Scott's presentation copy of *The Giaour*—the poem, oddly enough, that killed *Rokeby*. He met

"Childe Harold" (1812). Popularity of Byron.

Series of romantic tales in verse (1813–16).

Wordsworth much about the same time, and seems to have looked on him then with great respect, although his normal attitude, both before and after, was quite the reverse.

Byron's marriage and subsequent unhappiness.

But Byron had already taken the most fatal step of his life. From 1812 to 1814 he entertained a lukewarm admiration for Miss Anne Isabella Milbanke, daughter of Sir Ralph Milbanke (afterwards Noel), a young lady of considerable beauty and expectations, but of a temperament utterly different from his own. In the autumn of 1814 he made her a sudden proposal by letter, and was accepted. They were married in January, 1815, at Seaham, near Sunderland, spent their honeymoon at Halnaby, in the same neighbourhood, and settled down to married life at 13 Piccadilly Terrace. Byron's life was certainly very extravagant. In the course of the year the bailiffs were in the house nine times, and he had to sell his library; while, with a false delicacy, he declined to accept the copyrights of his poems or gave them away to his poorer friends. This was enough to annoy his wife; and her Calvinistic prejudices were further shocked by his attachment to the theatre and the society of the green-room. Their daughter, Augusta Ada (afterwards Lady Lovelace), was born in December, 1815. Less than three months later, Lady Byron had left her husband, accusing him of insanity and casting mysterious imputations on his character. There is no need to say anything more of this unhappy episode, save that it brought about Byron's social ruin and led him into those fatal irregularities which, in spite of rumour, he seems to have avoided previously. His *Domestic Pieces*, written at this time, and consisting partly of sentimental poetry, partly of addresses to his half-sister Mrs. Leigh, to whom he was passionately devoted, and partly of ill-humoured satire, are a lamentable instance of his vanity and bad taste. In the absence of any proof against him we can sympathise with him; but his lack of dignity and his utter incapacity for appreciating the fitness of things are faults which no sympathy can lead us to forget.

Retirement to Geneva.

On April 24, 1816, he left England for ever, and travelled through Belgium to Geneva, where he met the Shelleys. The companion of their wanderings, Jane (or, as she called herself, Claire) Clairmont, was with them. She had already fallen in love with Byron, and, in the expectation of seeing him, had pressed her unsuspecting friends to move to Geneva. Her illegitimate child, Allegra, was born after her return to England in January, 1817, Byron by that time being thoroughly weary of her and she of him. The disposal of the child became, for the next five years, a fruitful source of anxiety and strife until its death in 1822. It was during this residence with the Shelleys at Geneva that Mrs. Shelley wrote *Frankenstein* and Byron produced part of *The Vampire*, an unfinished and worthless tale of terror. However, this life came to an end, not without some disgust on both sides,

caused by the Clairmont episode. The Shelleys went back to England at the end of the summer of 1816, and Byron in the autumn took up his abode at Venice, renting a house at La Mira, and occupying the Palazzo Mocenigo in the city.

Life at Venice.

His life at Venice was aimless and debased. He was guilty of all the follies for which he had been blamed without reason at Newstead; he began to lose his beauty, and became fat and sensual. Nevertheless, his literary activity was not abated. In 1816, while at Geneva, he published the third canto of *Childe Harold* and *The Prisoner of Chillon*; his poems of 1817 were *Manfred* and *The Lament of Tasso*; in 1818 he finished *Childe Harold* with the fourth and best canto; in 1819 he produced *Beppo*, the clever foretaste of *Don Juan*, and, two months later, the first two cantos of *Don Juan* itself, which was brought to an incomplete finish, not without intermissions, in 1824. It was in April, 1819, that, at an evening party in Venice, he met Teresa delle Gambe, Countess Guiccioli, a girl of seventeen, who came of a noble Ravennese family, and had been married to a man much older than herself. There was a mutual attraction on both sides, ending in a companionship which, apart from its disagreeable external features and the internal history of the relations between Byron and the Count, was not altogether ignoble. This intimacy lasted with few breaks till Byron's departure for Greece. The Countess' marriage was dissolved by the Pope in 1820, and she went to live with Byron. In the meantime he had added to *Don Juan* (which, on the Countess' entreaty, he had temporarily abandoned), and had written *Mazeppa* (1819), and most of his dramas. *Marino Faliero*, *Sardanapalus*, dedicated to Goethe; *The Two Foscari*, and *Cain*, dedicated to Scott, were all published in 1821. In 1821, too, appeared *The Prophecy of Dante*, written two years before and prefaced by a sonnet to the Countess. After his final separation from her, when her brothers accompanied him to Greece, she still cherished his memory, and, long years after, made a pilgrimage to Cambridge and visited his rooms in Trinity. There can be no doubt that her influence did much to redeem him from the profligacy into which he had fallen at Venice. She was married a second time to the Marquis de Boissy, and died in 1873.

Love-affair with the Countess Guiccioli.

Byron occupied a house at Pisa in 1821, which he filled with an extraordinary collection of animals, birds, and curiosities. From October 1821 to April 1822 he enjoyed the constant society of Shelley, then at the height of his lyric splendour, and other friends. The practical result of these meetings was the determination to found a paper called *The Liberal*, and to bring out Leigh Hunt as editor. This project actually came to pass. Early in 1822 Hunt and his family were shipped out to Italy and set themselves down in Byron's house. *The Liberal* was not a

Life at Pisa.

Friendship with Shelley.

brilliant success; it lasted for only four numbers. Byron's contributions were, however, most brilliant, including *Heaven and Earth*, the translation of the first canto of *Morgante Maggiore*, the satire called *The Blues*, the lines *To my Grandmother's Review*, and, chief of all, *The Vision of Judgment*, in which he satirised Southey's laureate adulation very cruelly, but not unjustly. Murray had received the MS., but had hesitated to publish it, and had willingly transferred it to Hunt. Two important events happened in 1822; Byron's illegitimate daughter, Allegra, died in April, and in July Shelley was drowned in the Gulf of Spezzia. The same summer Byron left Pisa, where his servant had stabbed an hussar and so made the place too hot to hold him, and proceeded by carriage with the Countess, all his appurtenances, and his menagerie, to Leghorn, and thence to Genoa. The Hunts, who were still living with him, travelled in his yacht; but the partnership was almost immediately dissolved, now that Shelley was no longer alive. At Genoa he lived for a short time, associating with the Blessingtons and Count d'Orsay, and while here he wrote his last narrative poem, *The Island*. His work at Pisa had included his two last plays, *Werner* (1822), and *The Deformed Transformed* (1824), and, of course, the ever-present *Don Juan*. But the final act of this strange drama was at hand. His ardour for Greece and his strong revolutionary spirit led him, on the outbreak of the Greek War of Independence, to seek a more active life than his sluggish existence by the Mediterranean. A Greek committee had been formed to aid the insurgents; he was elected a member, gave £10,000 to the cause, and set sail for the Ionian Islands. From August to December, 1823, he was at Cephalonia, where there were projects afoot for making him the king of the island. In Christmas week he crossed to the mainland and joined a party of insurgents at Missolonghi, near the mouth of the Gulf of Patras. The place was fever-stricken, things were in a state of confusion, the Suliotes whom he commanded were in a perpetual condition of mutiny, and were hardly restrained by his influence. In February a regiment of English working men reinforced the garrison, but there was no principle of co-operation; and, while nothing was done, Byron, whose fever at Patras during his early travels had left his constitution exposed to such attacks, was sickening of malaria. He was prostrate with fever as the spring advanced, and died on April 19, 1824, amid the lamentations of the Greek patriots and to the universal sorrow of Europe. His body was taken to England and buried in the family vault at Hucknall Torkard, near Newstead. It is said that his former admirer, Lady Caroline Lamb, accidentally met the procession which carried him to his tomb, and that her mind, unhinged by the affair whose event had given some point to her rambling novel, *Glenarvon* (1816), gave

Removal from Pisa to Genoa.

Departure for Greece and death at Missolonghi.

way under the shock with fatal results. The statue of Byron which, some years after, was ordered by public subscription and executed by Thorwaldsen, was refused by two deans of Westminster, and was eventually placed in the library at Trinity College, Cambridge, by Dr. Whewell. Lady Byron survived her husband for many years, and died at Brighton in 1860; their daughter Ada married Lord Lovelace, and died in 1852. It is said that on his deathbed Byron sent affectionate messages to both, and it is certainly probable that, whatever his irregularities may have been after 1816, they were immensely aggravated by a sense of injury. His character, with all its impulsiveness and want of order, was not the character of a bad man, but of a good man who had been spoiled by capricious training and unfortunate circumstances; and the great catastrophe of his life was caused, it seems probable, by a defect of self-control rather than by any more serious and culpable cause.

Constituent qualities of Byron's early work. The Byronic hero.

§ 2. In taking Byron's work into account, its contemporary popularity and immense influence in Europe must be remembered. One may honestly doubt whether popular favour is any testimony to the real greatness of a poet, and there is certainly no shadow of doubt that the quality which Europe saw pre-eminent in Byron was not merely histrionic, but somewhat vulgarly melodramatic. He attracted attention by *Childe Harold*; he maintained his position by a series of romantic tales which all have the same theme of passionate, unreflecting love, the same tricks of manner, the same emotional and sentimental appeal, the same heroine, and the same hero. In *Childe Harold* he drew his own portrait with that frank impulse of self-revelation to which he yielded easily on every occasion; he represented himself as a confirmed cynic before his time, and as an enemy to society who nevertheless is capable of sentimental reflection and indulges freely in his capacity. This character was developed throughout the succeeding poems until the Byronic hero became an established literary fact. The elements of his character were meagre and unnatural, but he was set before the world with such force and intensity, and placed among surroundings so brilliant that Byron's readers lost sight of his obvious contradictions and worshipped him with pity and sympathy. To-day we are so thoroughly accustomed to theatrical pose in literature that we can survey his sombre scowling figure and listen to his insincere rejection of God and man with equanimity; but in the first quarter of the nineteenth century this fallen angel received compassionate credit for his virtues and shortcomings, and, even now, juvenile readers, to whom Wordsworth is dull and Shelley unintelligible, believe in him and in his complement, the dull, sensuous, devoted woman of the East. Nevertheless it is not wonderful that these loosely rhymed tales, with their moments of exaltation and their slips into bathos, eclipsed everything else for the time being. Scott

had written romances in verse with a wonderful variety of movement and incident, but with no pretence to character-drawing beyond a series of bold and superficial outlines. Byron came forward with a similar set of romances modelled partly upon Scott and partly, like Scott's own poems, upon *Christabel*, but filled with a spirit which simply put outward form out of the question. The novelty of scenery, the strangeness of an Eastern story, the attitudes of the heroes, may have been the superficial cause which made these tales the one thing needful to the age; but below these was the enduring existence of an originality, a passionate, individual life, which inflamed and still inflame the reader, even against his better judgment. Critics—and even great critics—of late years, judging Byron by his chaotic construction and sometimes execrable style, have done their best to belittle him and assure the world that his poetry is bad prose concealed beneath faulty rhyme. The importance of form and style and their fortunate prominence in recent poetry have done much to alter the critic's point of view; and there is a certain amount of justification for the harshness of the judgment. But no serious student of literature can neglect the fact that this white-hot river of words, so careless of obstacles and so irregular in its course, sends out from its heat and impetuosity a voice that still deafens us to the murmur of more tranquil streams, that its brightness of rushing water blinds us to its lawless progress through its uneasy channel. This is the impression which Byron's contemporaries derived from *Childe Harold*, from *The Corsair* and *Lara*, and from all the rest; it is an impression which still strikes us in these poems, and, above all, in *The Siege of Corinth*, with its unrestrained force of description; and it is an impression which proves, in its universality, that Byron's poetry, if not faultless, is great. His influence springs, then, from two causes: externally from an uncontrolled volume of sound and effect of brilliance which, by themselves, might not count for much; more deeply and intimately, from the spirit of revolution which proclaims itself in these accidents. Byron's monopoly of admiration during his lifetime and for years afterwards, was not only a matter of taste; it was at once the symbol and a principal cause of an entire change in public opinion. Byron was in no sense the father of the romantic movement—it is curious to notice from time to time how his own appreciations were formed by eighteenth-century models. He cannot be said to have popularised it so enduringly as Scott, although in this respect he was certainly Scott's ally. His influence on poets was emphatically not that of Coleridge or Keats or Shelley. But, to use an inadequate term, he was the great political force of the movement; his name stood for the destruction of old ideals and shadowed forth the formation of new. The Byronic hero

Faultiness of Byron's verse compensated for by its vigour.

Byron as the apostle of revolution: his European influence.

gloomed and sulked amid the ruins of an old world, vaguely seeking for something better. Obviously Byron, in his work of annihilation, presented no new constructive theory, but remained the discontented prophet of a chaotic future. His method of demolition was headlong and thoughtless. He was a petulant iconoclast who did not care where his blows fell. But his influence was profoundly felt. In England, the change of thought in which he had actively participated led to such measures as the repeal of Roman Catholic disabilities and the Reform Bill of 1832. Abroad, his influence was a revival of the influence of Rousseau. His patriotism and love of liberty, apart from any narrow considerations of geography, his warm sentimentality, his attitudes and affectations, made their mark in literature and politics alike. The post-Napoleonic history of France, with its melodramatic heroes, their sudden popularity and sudden fall, reads like the work of Byron's imagination; while in foreign literature two great poets at least—Alfred de Musset and Heine—combined with a greater sense of artistic form a dominant and incurable Byronism of manner.

§ 3. These early poems are the nucleus of Byron's work and the chief cause of his influence. However, the best of his genius is to be found in his satirical poems. From its crude but brilliant beginning in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* to its mature culmination in *Don Juan*, his satiric humour grew and improved. The Byronic hero is eminently sardonic, but is far too exclusively occupied with himself to be humorous. On the other hand, when Byron forgot his identity with *Childe Harold* and the spirit of self-complacent pessimism, he became frankly amusing in spite of the bitterness of his humour. *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* is a savage attack which brought repentance in its train; but it exists as a comic guide to the literature of the time, and its injustice and ferocity are not those of a man who has lost hope of himself and seeks refuge in mere spite. Some of the earlier satires—the *Hints from Horace* and *The Waltz*, for instance—are feeble and pointless; but in *Beppo* and *The Vision of Judgment* there is an amazing clearness and directness. *Beppo* is a light satire on Italian society, describing an intrigue in Venice with the insight and knowledge into Venetian manners which Byron had gained during his residence there. *The Vision of Judgment*, on the other hand, which is one of Byron's finest achievements in any line, is unmerciful enough if we look at it from the point of view in which any attack on the generous and devoted Southey is unjust and cruel. But Southey had been the first to attack, from his Tory standpoint, what he considered to be Byron's immorality. He had, moreover, written an execrably bad and grotesquely profane poem, and, on both these counts, deserved castigation; while his transition from Liberalism to the Laureateship naturally provoked

Byron's satires: "English Bards," etc.

"Beppo" (1819) and "The Vision of Judgment" (1822).

Byron's anger. In any case, *The Vision of Judgment* remains one of the great satires of the world.

"*Don Juan*" (1819–1824).

The *ottava rima* was again used, and Southey was again addressed with scanty compliment in *Don Juan*, the longest and most characteristic of Byron's poems, and certainly one of the most remarkable productions symbolical of that age of revolution and scepticism. The metre in which the whole work is written was borrowed freely from Italian sources, particularly from the serio-comic writers who followed the lead of Ariosto. The outline of the story is the old Spanish legend of Don Juan de Tenorio, on which, among other works, were founded Molière's *Festin le Pierre* and the *Don Giovanni* of Mozart. Taking the atheist and voluptuary as his fundamental idea, Byron carried his hero through various adventures, serious and comic, and, unfettered by any necessities of time and place, gave the rein to his unrivalled power of description. Don Juan is a young Spanish hidalgo whose education is described with strong satiric power and with frequent and bitter personal allusions to those against whom Byron had a grudge. Being detected in a scandalous intrigue with a married woman, he is obliged to leave Spain, embarks on board a ship which is wrecked in the Greek archipelago, and is thrown, the only survivor, exhausted and almost dying, upon one of the smaller Cyclades. Here he is cherished and sheltered by Haidee, the lovely and half-savage daughter of the master of the isle, Lambro, who is absent on a piratical expedition. Haidee and Juan are married ; but in the midst of the wedding festivities Lambro returns, Juan is overpowered, wounded, and put on board the pirate's vessel to be carried to Constantinople, and Haidee soon afterwards dies of grief and despair. Juan is exposed for sale in the slave-market at Stamboul, attracts the notice of the favourite Sultana Gulbeyaz, who buys him and introduces him, disguised as an odalisque, into the harem. He, however, refuses her love, and escapes from Constantinople in company with an Englishman named Johnson whom he has met in slavery. He then arrives at Ismail, which is being besieged by Suwarow and the Russian army. The description of the siege and capture, taken from official sources, are carried through two cantos and are reproduced with an astonishing fidelity to life. Juan, distinguishing himself in the assault, is chosen to carry the bulletin of victory to the Empress Catherine. At the Court of St. Petersburg Juan becomes the Tsaritsa's lover and favourite, but his health gives way and he is sent on a diplomatic mission to England. Here we have a very minute and sarcastic account of English aristocratic society ; but, just as Don Juan is in sight of a new intrigue, the poem breaks off. In this imperfect state it consists of sixteen cantos, and there is no reason why it should not have been indefinitely extended. Byron himself intended to bring his hero's adventures to a regular termination ; but so

desultory a series of adventures has no real coherency. The actual merit of this extraordinary poem lies in its plethora of witty allusion and sarcastic reflection, and, above all, in the constant passage from the loftiest and most tender tone of poetry to the most familiar and mocking style. These transitions are incessant, and the artifice of such sudden change of sentiment, at first dazzling and enchanting the reader, ultimately wearies him. The tone of morality is low and selfish throughout, and everything, whether good or bad, is made the subject of a sneer; yet this cynicism of tone perpetually finds its contrast in the warmest outbursts of feeling and most admirable descriptions of nature. In spite of much vulgar and superficial flippancy *Don Juan* contains an immense quantity of profound and melancholy satire, and here and there we discover a power, picturesqueness, and pathos which may find their parallel in other works but can be surpassed nowhere.

§ 4. Byron's dramatic works are in many respects the antithesis to our expectations. In form they are cold and severe, and their model is Alfieri rather than Shakespeare. They have little or no intrigue and are destitute of powerful passion; on the other hand they are full of intense sentiment. The best of them are *Cain* and *Manfred*, neither of which are properly speaking dramas, but rather an arrangement of dramatic soliloquies following the form of Goethe's *Faust*. In *Cain* we see the full expression of Byron's scepticism; in both we recognise the tone of half-melancholy, half-mocking misanthropy which colours so much of his work and combines a partial sincerity with the desire for effect; and in both there is full evidence of that revolutionary spirit whose incarnation Byron was. *Manfred*, consisting of the incoherent communings of the hero, and depending very largely on supernatural machinery, has a strong likeness to *Faust* and a certain poetic splendour which approaches to the dramatic pathos of *Cain*; but in neither of these sceptical dramas did the poet write with entire sincerity. His attitude towards religion was an indifference which he never conquered; and, although at one period of his life he must have been under Shelley's influence, he never adopted the violent anti-religious tone which characterised his friend's writing. Apart from *Cain* and *Manfred* it must be confessed that Byron's dramas are dull. He had admirable subjects in his Venetian tragedies, *Marino Faliero* and *The Two Foscari*; but it is only necessary to form a judgment upon them by comparing them with a fine effort of rhetorical tragedy like Otway's *Venice Preserved*. We might reasonably expect something of the same kind from so eloquent and versatile a poet; but there is no variety in his characters, and the interest is concentrated upon the obstinate harping of the principal persons on one topic—their own wrongs and humiliations. This is undeniably

Byron's dramatic poetry: "Cain" (1821) and "Manfred" (1817).

Lesser dramas. "Marino Faliero," etc.

impressive, and gives us the chance of hearing noble tirades and soliloquies; but a play constructed on this principle has absolutely no dramatic interest, since it allows of no mutual action and reaction of character; and it is not astonishing to learn that the production of *Marino Faliero* at Covent Garden was a failure. In *Sardanapalus*, again, the epoch is too remote; our knowledge of Assyrian life is too small and shadowy to give the play any reality. The beautiful character of Myrrha is an anachronism and impossibility, and the antithetic contrast between Sardanapalus' effeminacy and sudden heroism belongs rather to satire and moral disquisition than to tragedy. *The Deformed Transformed* was casually borrowed from German sources and from Scott's *Black Dwarf*, while *Werner* was taken bodily from the German's story in Miss Lee's *Canterbury Tales*. It retained possession of the stage for a long time, because, like *Sardanapalus*, it gave a good opportunity for stage decoration and declamation; but Byron's share in it was little more than the cutting up of Miss Lee's prose into tolerably regular but often very indifferent lines.

Summary. Development of Byron's genius.

In summing up Byron's work it is safe to say that his dramas exist merely because they are in the same book as his poems. *Cain* and *Manfred*, it is true, have a more independent life, but one is at liberty to doubt whether they are much read. Byron made his fame by *Childe Harold*. His claims to an European reputation were developed through the succeeding romances, until the author of *The Giaour* and *The Corsair* had planted himself in the eye of the world, a sinister and attractive figure. But to our day Byron is pre-eminently the author of *Don Juan*. None of his poems has been more universally read and studied; not one of them reflects his peculiarities of character so thoroughly. *Childe Harold* is a poem passage after passage of which may be recalled with pleasure; but, at the best, it is not first-rate, and its effect is produced by its showiness and artificiality. The growth of power from this theatrical poem of travel to the incomparable miscellany in which Byron gave himself so quaintly and unreservedly to the world needs no demonstration; but it must be remembered that Byron's fame was made before any part of *Don Juan* had been published, that the distinctively Byronic tenets—or rather negations—were already familiar and admired. Since those days Byronic criticism has had its fluctuations, and there has been a time at which the name of Byron became practically obsolete. Nevertheless, like all great poets, he has not been thrust out of his own; and, if his immense and meteoric popularity was succeeded by a flat season of oblivion, after nearly eighty years, it may be believed, he has come to be reckoned in his proper place amid the great spirits who set the law to our literature at the opening of its most prolific century.

§ 5. In certain points there is a strong similarity between the

careers of Byron and PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY. They were friends; each died young; each was unfortunate in his early training; the early manhood of each fell in the evil times of the Regency and the Holy Alliance; each was unfortunate in his domestic relations; each found an asylum from his misfortunes in Italy. More important than all, each, in his own way, was the poet of revolution and spent his life in assailing fraud and tyranny in high places. It is a curious thing that both poets were members of the aristocracy. Shelley came of an old county family, and, had he lived long enough, would have become a baronet. He was born at Field Place near Horsham on August 4, 1792. He inherited personal beauty from his mother, who seems to have been an accomplished woman; his father was an obstinate country squire, full of pomposity and tradition, from whom the son inherited nothing. Shelley was a delicate, sensitive boy, with a violent temper and a precocious intellect. At his private school, which was at Brentford, he was severely bullied, and during his six years at Eton he fared no better. "Mad Shelley," as he was called, showed a great interest in natural science, experimented on a willow with a burning-glass, and attempted to raise the devil by means of an electrical appliance. In his last year at Eton he turned his attention to literature. It must be owned that the poet who, within twelve years, rose to an inexpressible perfection of lyric verse, produced during 1810 work of an astonishing badness. The *Original Poetry by Victor and Cazire*—Shelley and his sister—which found a publisher in September of that year, was utterly lost to sight for more than eighty years after, and then was rediscovered and published in 1898—does not merely add nothing to Shelley's fame but convicts him of incredible silliness. This and the two romances of *Zastrozzi* and *St. Irvyne*, published in the same year and preserved from just oblivion by sedulous editors, show that the influence of "Monk" Lewis and the tale of terror had an early effect on him which was not without permanence. He had a constitutional tendency to hallucinations, and the later years of his life are full of strange and romantic stories which are of a piece with Lewis' and Mrs. Radcliffe's wildest imaginings. Without judging Shelley too harshly, it would have been difficult at this period to have found a more scatter-brained person in the whole of England. He went up to University College, Oxford, in September, 1810, and devoted himself to anarchy and atheism. He wrote some doggerel which was published as the *Posthumous Fragments of Margaret Nicholson*, by "John FitzVictor." Margaret Nicholson was a lunatic who had attempted to assassinate George III. His next freak was a pamphlet called *The Necessity of Atheism*, which contained a statement of his anti-religious convictions and was sent by him to the bishops and heads of houses. The authorities, taking fright at the

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY (1792–1822).

At Eton.

Life at Oxford.

heterodoxy of a freshman who was little more than eighteen years old, admonished and expelled him. He proceeded to London with the desultory intention of studying medicine, and began to visit the hospitals. But he already had met and fallen in love with a schoolfellow of his sister's named Harriet Westbrook, the daughter of a retired hotel-keeper. She seems to have been elated with the prospect of an alliance beyond her station, and, disliking the idea of going back to school, wrote to Shelley, complaining that she was suffering persecution from her family, and throwing herself on his protection. Shelley was at the same time very much attached to the intellect, if not to the person, of a clever schoolmistress named Elizabeth Hitchener ; but he listened to Harriet's complaint. They ran away together and were married at Edinburgh, to the scandal of Shelley's father, who forbade him his house. At first they were happy, but their tastes were very different, and their happiness was much hindered by the fact that Mrs. Shelley's sister, a vulgar and interfering woman, accompanied them wherever they went. They lived in great poverty, moving about from one romantic place to another—from Keswick to Ireland, from Ireland to a lovely valley in Radnorshire, from Radnorshire to Lynmouth. Shelley was occupying himself meanwhile with political chimeras. At Lynmouth he wrote a poem and anarchist address, copies of which he sent out to sea in boxes and bottles ; this nefarious act alarmed the local representatives of authority, and he had to escape to North Wales, where he lived at Tanyrallt, a charming cottage on a knoll by the Glaslyn estuary. He had been here for nearly six months when his house was outraged by two nocturnal attacks—happening, according to some, only in his imagination. The restless household packed up their goods once more, went to the South of Ireland, contrived to leave the superfluous sister-in-law at Killarney, and came back to live at Bracknell, on the borders of Windsor Forest. In September, 1813, *Queen Mab*, the earliest of Shelley's important poems, was printed privately.

His marriage and subsequent wanderings.

In 1814 came the tragic separation from his wife. Shelley, in his intercourse with the anarchist William Godwin, met and began to take a serious interest in his daughter, Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, a clever girl, whose tastes were absolutely suited to his own. This would have been merely a Platonic friendship, had it not been that Harriet Shelley, who was essentially vain and frivolous, had been gradually estranging herself from her husband. In March, 1814, before he had met Mary Godwin, Shelley made an effort to retain his wife by a re-marriage according to the English rite. This proved useless. Harriet ceased to take any interest in his plans, and so, when he made Mary Godwin's acquaintance, he was aggrieved and thoroughly prepared for a change. It is safe to say, however,

Separation from Harriet. Beginning of relations with Mary Godwin.

that Shelley was now wiser than he had been, and that he treated his wife with no resentment. She rushed upon her ruin in June, when she left him finally to live with her parents. The rest of her story is lost in a miserable obscurity. It is sufficient to say that in December, 1816, her body was found in the Serpentine. Nor is Shelley to be blamed altogether for the sequel of 1814. Mary Godwin's father, his political and social mentor, had taught him, with other negative philosophy, the doctrines of free-love ; and the flight of the lovers to Switzerland was an example of a dogma to which he stood pledged, and was conducted with Godwin's approval. And, in spite of the folly of the affair, which saddled him with a continual anxiety in the person of his wife's companion and half-sister, Miss Clairmont, and in the persistent demands of an embarrassed and poverty-stricken father-in-law, he bore himself with an uprightness and conscientiousness that cannot be too highly praised. The relations between Miss Clairmont and Byron, of which he was at first entirely ignorant, tried all his tact. In 1815 he became reconciled to his father, received from him an annuity of £1000, and settled £200 of it upon his first wife. All this time he wandered about between England and the Continent. At the end of 1816, when the news of Harriet's death was known, he married Mary Godwin at St. Mildred's in the City of London ; and during 1817 they lived at Great Marlow, enjoying the society of Leigh Hunt and Thomas Love Peacock.

In 1816 *Alastor*, the poem which gave proof for the first time of Shelley's magnificent genius, was published. He was writing *The Revolt of Islam*—or, to give it its first title, *Laon and Cythna*—at Marlow, sitting beside the Thames or resting in a boat in the backwaters of the river. It was published in 1818, when the Shelleys returned to Italy, and Shelley again met Byron at Venice. *Julian and Maddalo* (1824), written at this period, is a reminiscence of the meeting, and the *Lines written among the Euganean Hills* were composed in a villa at Este which belonged to Byron. Later in the year he was at Rome and Naples, where he wrote the *Stanzas in Dejection* ; but in 1819 he moved northward again to Leghorn and Florence. The *Ode to the West Wind* was written in the autumn, and *The Cenci* advanced during the winter. In 1820, when *Prometheus Unbound* was published in London, he was partly at the Baths of San Giuliano, partly at Pisa. The marvellous lyrics of 1820, including *Arethusa*, the *Skylark*, *The Sensitive Plant*, and the *Hymn of Pan*, to say nothing of others, lead up to the almost too faultless *Adonais* of 1821. At Pisa he also wrote *Epipsychidion*, the memorial of his friendship with the unhappy Emilia Viviani, and was in constant communication with Byron. Their common enthusiasm for the liberty of Greece produced Shelley's *Hellas*, which was dedicated to the patriot Prince Alexander

"Alastor" and following poems.

Mavrocordato. By 1822 he had produced a voluminous body of verse, and was busy with fresh plans for new lyrics, tragedies, and philosophical poems. But those whom the gods love die young. In April, 1822, he and his friend Edward Elliker Williams removed their households from Pisa to Lerici on the Gulf of Spezzia. He had always loved sailing, and, on July 8 of the same year, started out on a yachting expedition to Leghorn. A terrible storm overtook the boat not far from land, and it went down with all on board. His body was washed ashore ten days later, and on August 16 was cremated with pagan rites by Byron and Leigh Hunt. His heart, which would not burn, was given to his wife; his ashes were taken to Rome and buried in the old cemetery beneath the shadow of Caius Cestius' tomb.

Death of Shelley.

§ 6. Shelley's whole life was a lyric rapture, coloured by intangible dreams and visions. So ardent was his sympathy with mankind, and so intense was his abhorrence of the corruption and suffering which he saw around him, that the very intensity of his sympathy clouded his reason, and he fell into the common error of all enthusiasts, the fancy that, were the present organisation of society swept away, a millennium would immediately ensue. From Godwin he learned to trace the degradation of mankind to the institutions of religion, government, and marriage, and not to the excesses which such institutions are intended to restrain. This, after all, is merely an accident of his poetry. To trace a demoralising influence in Shelley is possible only to very sensitive and prejudiced persons. Of no poet can it be said with more truth that his manner is everything, while his subject is perfectly immaterial to the reader. In this respect he forms the exact antithesis to the popular poets of his age. In spite of the connection between their lives and a certain similarity of political attitude, there is an extraordinary difference between Shelley and Byron—Julian and Maddalo. Byron's verse is often imposing, always enthusiastic; but its subject is always the most important thing about it. Byron is the last poet whom we take up for the sake of the sensuous pleasure to be derived from him; it would be very difficult to point to a line which is attractive on the ground of its harmony severed from every other consideration. Shelley, on the other hand, is first and foremost of the poets who charm by sheer musical effect; we read him because we see in his work the secret of sound and the perfect mastery of words. If we examine his philosophy, its beginning and end is found in one simple enthusiasm, the love of liberty; but, to illustrate this eternal theme, he soared into a region where words are no longer merely symbols of thought, but are themselves living organisms, possessing sympathies and antipathies, and vibrating to every touch. The literary parentage of Shelley is the merest guesswork; he is somewhat singular in his isolation from ancestry

Purely lyric character of Shelley's poetry.

and descendants alike, and has no definite place in the regular evolution of English poetry. But, remembering that in 1816, when *Queen Mab* was published, those two exquisite poems, *Christabel* and *Kubla Khan*, which had been written many years before and were known to poets, appeared for the first time in book-form, and connecting this with the fact that one of Shelley's earliest lyrics is addressed to Coleridge in a tone of pathetic admiration, we may conclude that Shelley owed something of his science of sound to that most inspired of the poets of the time. At any rate the magic of pure poetry, revived by Coleridge and revealed in his three great masterpieces of lyric work, was carried to its supreme height by Shelley. The mystery of perfect sound and harmony has, however, its undefined limitations, and Shelley's work in consequence produced no school of imitators. Browning passionately admired him in his early youth, but nothing could be more unlike Shelley than most of Browning's poetry; and even Mr. Swinburne, who has many points of kinship and likeness with the "Sun-treader"—to use Browning's youthful phrase—is an instance of sudden and spontaneous growth referable to no immediate and direct influence.

Shelley and contemporary poets.

Nevertheless, if Shelley's place in poetry is unique, the influence of scholarship is to be detected in every line that he wrote. More especially is he one of those poets who have been prompted to song by their love of the Greek lyric. His verse is pre-eminently the vehicle of Hellenic thought in English. Other poets have been pervaded by a similar taste, but none has so thoroughly assimilated it. We notice that Shelley, even where he is most eloquent, never loses self-restraint; that he has a thorough command of his art even where the temptation to let it go its own way is greatest. The *Ode to the West Wind*, for example—certainly a masterpiece which is an epitome of its writer's art—is distinguished by no dazzling gorgeousness of phrase; its epithets are few and simple; in short, its expression is austere. But one cannot arrive at this perfect economy of phrase without preparatory selection, without the rigid exercise of self-control and self-criticism. That gift of perfect discrimination which comes to so few was Shelley's, and the faultless *Ode to the West Wind* is its best example; for in it we see the marriage of the most exquisite words to the most exquisite music—not less exquisite in that the words are so simple and the harmonies so easily understood. And the result of this union is an unrivalled suggestiveness of phrase which gives every image a thousand separate faces and is absolutely limitless in its extent. The sparing austerity of the style is reproductive; it creates that perennial freshness of the lyric, which cannot exist if the resources of every image are exhausted in a procession of jewelled phrases. Shelley learned this from the Greek poets: it is the secret which underlies the greatest

His Hellenism. "Ode to the West Wind" (1819).

choruses of Sophocles. But, side by side with this Hellenism, there existed the influence of older poets, and particularly of those Elizabethan writers whose study was being revived so sedulously. It is unnecessary to point out the footmarks of the Elizabethan playwrights in *The Cenci*, that play in which Shelley, in manner as well as in subject, leaped back past the tragedy of Dryden and Otway, not indeed to the side of Shakespeare, but to a place in that strong and melancholy band which surrounds his throne. Even in the most obviously Hellenic of Shelley's works, the *Prometheus Unbound*, and in those lyrics whose limbs burn "through the vest which seems to hide them" with the light and ageless beauty of Greek choric song, there is an unmistakable trace of Elizabethan form. The irregularity of metre is often Elizabethan rather than Greek; the easy swinging motion of such songs as "To the deep, to the deep, down, down!" has a purely Elizabethan carelessness and happiness of rhythm; and the abruptness with which the songs frequently end and die away in a soft echo—in short, the whole unstudied effect, the ease with which the most meditated poem becomes in appearance a snatch of song, the suddenness and, one might even say, the exquisite sketchiness of the Elizabethan lyric, are reproduced in this unique poetic drama.

Elizabethan quality in his poetry. "The Cenci" (1820).

"Prometheus Unbound" (1820).

This mixture of two great literary forces in the work of the same man is to be found, as we shall see, in Keats, but with a manifest difference. Certainly no poet in whom such instincts were so strongly developed managed to absorb them in his own individuality so thoroughly as Shelley. Yet, even with this, *The Cenci* and *Prometheus Unbound*, still more *Hellas*, give the reader the impression of an experiment in a foreign manner. If we detach each lyric from the *Prometheus*, if we study it separately, we can appreciate its relation to Shelley's genius; but, when we read the poem as a consecutive whole, it leaves a sense of artificiality behind it. And emphatically the poems in which we see Shelley himself most thoroughly and convincingly are the occasional lyrics, well known to every lover of poetry, and, among the longer works, *Alastor*, *The Revolt of Islam*, *Adonais*, and *Epipsychidion*. *The Revolt of Islam* is Shelley's longest poem, a procession of splendid verses hung together on a very slender story. It treats with greater power and command of art the subjects which had been previously handled in *Queen Mab*, attacking all the beliefs that Shelley thought it his mission to destroy. So far as its militant anarchism is concerned, one is inclined to decide that Shelley is tilting at windmills; but as a magnificent expression of ardent Quixotism the poem has no equal. It is a mistake, however, to read it consecutively, for not only is the long-drawn melody of some five hundred stanzas in an eminently stately metre rather overpowering, but Shelley had

"The Revolt of Islam" (1818).

not the art of telling a consecutive story. Familiarity with his work is a gradual growth. He should be studied slowly and laid down for the time being when the appreciation shows signs of flagging. The real love of Shelley is the most elect pleasure to which the student of poetry can attain ; but, like every other perfect thing, it is not reached immediately.

Alastor, similarly, short as it is, is so packed with pregnant images and lyric phrase that the first impression which it gives is bewildering. The mystic description of the solitary poet, severed from the sympathy of the world, and driven into solitude and despair by misunderstanding and ingratitude, is a pathetic piece of autobiography ; and the form of the poem is as perfect as it could be. It is, of course, an early piece of work—if any work included in the incessant lyric eloquence of six short years can be called early —in which Shelley's imagination runs to excess ; it shows few signs of that capacity for self-repression which distinguishes the poems of later years. The scene changes like a kaleidoscope : we are borne with the poet through an atmosphere of delirium in which the realities of life are visions. Certain passages, especially the superb lines describing the poet's voyage in the entrails of Caucasus and his ascent on the spirals of the subterranean whirlpool, have the effect of a nightmare—the dimensionless vastness of their imagination is almost terrible. Yet, in spite of sustained violence and breathlessness, in spite of a reckless prodigality of description which is hardly characteristic of Shelley, *Alastor* is one of the great masterpieces of romantic poetry. While he scatters the path of his verse with "flowers so sweet the sense faints picturing them," he strews them so that their scent forces on us above everything else the awful feeling of solitude and desolation that is the *raison d'être* of the poem. His world, full of fragrance and melody, is an uninhabited dreamland which unfolds itself in a solemn stillness to his solitary and despairing traveller. And, if this emphasised loneliness is the key-note of *Alastor*, the motive recurring again and again and rising above the lovely embroidery of extemporised melody, the motive of *Adonais*, on the other hand, is a stately and classical melancholy. Considered simply as verse, *Adonais* has the lingering metre and sustained smoothness of *The Revolt of Islam* ; it is a triumph of processional melody, in which the slow footsteps of the mourners keep noiseless time to the softly modulated dirge. But, more than this, it is the poem which, out of all Shelley's work, brings us into the closest relation with his unique genius. For the point of *Adonais* is the predominance of a single lyric theme over everything else. Through the cadences of the prolonged dirge rises and falls the strain which tells us that this is, first and last, the ethereal music of mourning and concentrates our attention upon itself alone. Until we catch this essential fact we are likely to think *Adonais*

"*Alastor*" (1816).

"*Adonais*" (1821).

prolix and disconnected. Thought and imagination are there in plenty, but in complete subordination to the lyric quality.

Other poems and lyrics. General remarks.

To speak of *The Witch of Atlas*, of *Epipsychidion*—the poem in which Shelley somewhat obscurely formulated his philosophy of Platonic love for the benefit of Emilia Viviani—of such lyrics as the *Skylark*, or the *Euganean Hills*, the *Ode to Night*, or *The Recollection*, is simply to reiterate the supremacy of the musical element in Shelley's poetry. The inference is that it does not please everybody; that there are many to whom it is a perplexity and bewilderment. To demand regular and logical argument, straightforward and unconfused narrative, from Shelley, is to go to work the wrong way; those who start with this impression will end in accusing him of wilful obscurity and exclusive devotion to sound, or will find other serious objections to him. The right method of studying his poetry and rising to its full enjoyment is to treat it as abstract music, as the consummation of pure lyric rhapsody. Few of Shelley's phrases—except lines like the famous image of the "dome of many-coloured glass"—have found their way into our proverbial philosophy; but the compilers of our lyric anthologies find in him the most important of all the singers they have to reckon with. As a prophet of revolution he effected very little; his enthusiasms were curiously inoperative. But the heat of passion which incited him to attack all social and religious conventions so radically found its true altar in his matchless sense of the beauty of words, and still glows in all the splendid sacrifice of his poetry with an immortal flame.

§ 7. Of the three great poets whose work is at once the complement and the antithesis of the poetry of the "Lake School," the most exceptional where personal circumstances are concerned was JOHN KEATS. He was the son of a stable-owner in Finsbury Pavement, and his home for the first nine years of his life was in that unromantic part of London or its immediate neighbourhood. His father and mother were both of them intelligent and clever, and his family relations were always of the happiest. He went to school at Enfield, where he was industrious and a general favourite. Nothing can be more false than the charge of effeminacy which seems even now to cling to his name: manly, self-reliant, and athletic, he was the very reverse of a morbid schoolboy. Like Byron and Shelley, he made life-long friends. The first of these was Charles Cowden Clarke, the son of his schoolmaster—a name well-known to students of Shakespeare. When he was fourteen he nursed his mother on her death-bed; and, a few months after, was apprenticed by the worthy but obstinate merchant who had been appointed his guardian, to a surgeon at Edmonton. He began to write poetry very early, and, although he continued to study his profession, cancelled his indentures with his employer in 1814 and came to live in

JOHN KEATS (1795–1821).

London. In 1815 he wrote his first notable poem, the sonnet *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer*, and in the next year was introduced by Cowden Clarke to Leigh Hunt, by whom in turn he was introduced to Shelley, J. H. Reynolds, and the painter Haydon. Hunt published the *Homer* sonnet in his *Examiner* for December 1. In the meantime Keats, who was living with his brothers Tom and George, had been admitted a licentiate in surgery at Apothecaries' Hall; but in 1817 he gave up medicine, published a volume of poems, and, after a visit to Shanklin and Margate, settled down with his brothers at Hampstead, not far from Hunt and other friends. Here he wrote most of *Endymion*, which was finished at Burford Bridge, near Dorking, and was published in May, 1818. Although Hampstead was his nominal home, he moved restlessly about. In the spring of 1818 he was at Teignmouth, nursing his brother Tom, who had developed the family tendency to consumption and died in the following December. In the summer he took a long walking tour with his friend Brown in the English Lakes and Scotland, returning by boat from Cromarty in August. At the end of the year he found himself alone, for his brother George had sailed for America in June; he went to live with Brown at a house in Hampstead called Wentworth Place, which previously had been occupied by Brown and Dilke. Undoubtedly the decline of his health began in this year, although the cruel reviews in the *Quarterly* and *Blackwood*, which were bitterly opposed to the "Cockney school" in literature, probably had little to do with it. The Scotch tour, in which he caught cold and suffered from ulcerated sore throat, was a far more substantial cause. At the same time he fell deeply in love with a shallow and vain girl called Fanny Brawne, whose mother had rented Brown's house at Hampstead. This was a perpetual strain on his nervous system, and, although Miss Brawne was not without good points, and probably loved him as much as was consistent with her superficial character, her constant flirtations vexed his sensitive temperament. In 1819 he worked at *Hyperion*, which was cast aside unfinished, and wrote his great odes, *Lamia*, and the tragedy called *Otho the Great*. The wonderful volume containing *Lamia*, *Isabella*, and *St. Agnes' Eve*, was published in July, 1820. But in February, after a cold night ride, consumption had set in rapidly. During the summer he was nursed by the Hunts and then by the Brawnes. In September he went abroad with his friend Severn, first to Naples and afterwards to Rome, where they lodged in the Piazza di Spagna. On February 23 he died, and was buried three days later in the old cemetery beside the pyramid of Caius Cestius.

Life at Hampstead, etc., and poetic work.

Illness and love affairs: early death.

§ 8. At the end of the next year another poet, as we have seen, followed him to the same resting-place. When Shelley's

body was cast up on the beach at Lerici, two books were found on him—Sophocles and Keats. The attraction which Keats' poetry exercised upon Shelley can be easily understood; and we read Keats, as we read Shelley, rather for the sake of the pure poetic pleasure which he gives us than for the sake of any contribution to our thought. But no two poets could be less alike. In the first place, Keats' verse has none of Shelley's austerity and self-restraint. His use of phrase is often farfetched and strained; he went out out of his way to seek fantastical images, to load his verse with a sensuous and enervating beauty. *Endymion*, despite its manifold beauties, is the most cloying of English poems. It is a mass of splendid descriptions, glowing with all the colour that could possibly be laid on and absolutely redundant with minute detail. One thing is obvious, that this elaborate use of phrase can only be exhausting, that in its summing-up of each little beauty of form and colour there is no real proportion, and that the effect is consequently flat and barren. *Endymion* has the brilliant and deceptive glow of a bank of splendid scentless flowers. Yet *Endymion*, although his longest poem, is fortunately not representative of Keats. In the short period allotted him he passed this stage of crowded colour and emasculated style. *Lamia*, *Hyperion*, the odes to Autumn and the Grecian Urn, speak of a taste that has grown purer by experience and of a matured sense of selection. Nevertheless we find in Keats no lyric buoyancy, none of that self-forgetfulness which seems to choose the inevitable word spontaneously and without reflection. Every line is curiously wrought, with a desire for effect and with an immanent self-consciousness. Each phrase, purged of redundancy though it be, wears an air of melancholy languor. In *Hyperion* there is a majesty which Keats never reached in any other poem; but it is sad and slow-stepping, dejected and sometimes weary of its own motion. Yet there is obviously a great difference between the calmness of this superb blank verse in its dark robe studded with jewels, and the voluptuous, sensuous pride which flaunts itself in every fold of the gaudy vesture of *Endymion*. There is no activity in either, but the later poem has a quality which the earlier does not possess. The sound of *Endymion* falls monotonously and superfluously on our ears; *Hyperion* is the flood-gate of new and endless harmonies.

Contrast between Keats and Shelley: Keats' use of gorgeous colour.

Languid beauty of his poetry.

Again, Keats, unlike Shelley, had a poetic ancestry; he was born, he did not spring into life, a bewildering and unaccountable phenomenon. We have seen in Shelley's work the existence of two influences, the Greek and Elizabethan; and these we recognise obviously in Keats. But the difference is that with Shelley reminiscence and imitation have very little place; his Hellenism,

His place in English literature.

his Elizabethanism were part of his instinct; something of the lyric spirit of all previous ages went to his making and bore fruit in him without external influence. It is only by a mere accident of chronology that he belongs to the nineteenth century, for in any century he must have been the same. Keats, on the other hand, necessarily and properly belongs to the nineteenth century, and takes a regular place in the evolution of its poetry. It is true, of course, contradictory as it may seem, that Keats owed a great deal to instinct. His education included neither Greek nor medieval literature, and yet in his odes he was filled with the Greek spirit, while in *La Belle Dame sans Mercy* he produced a romantic ballad of the first order. He was one of those people who are born with certain tastes and habits of mind belonging to another age. But, as regards his form, Keats is the disciple of the Elizabethan poets, the grand example of that return to old models which was achieved at the beginning of the nineteenth century. This is to deny no originality to Keats. Because his verse is Spenserian, there is no reason for calling him an imitator; rather, his poetical faculty is naturally so assimilated to Spenser's that he becomes his complement. In *Hyperion*, again, we hear the harmonies of Milton; but *Hyperion* is not necessarily inferior to *Paradise Lost*. We cannot properly appreciate Keats until we know something of Spenser and Milton, nor can we thoroughly understand their place in poetry until we realise how wonderfully the influence of their genius is extended in Keats. His lyrics, again, like the song to Sorrow in *Endymion*, are equal to the best of the early seventeenth century, and are certainly comparable to nothing else. This association with the noble English verse of a past age is the strengthening influence in his work. His Hellenism, exquisite in itself, is certainly morbid. If Shelley, in his purity and glowing life, reminds us of the greatest Greek poets, Æschylus and Sophocles, Keats' verse has the "dying fall" and luxurious inertness of the Anthology; it is the poetry not of May but of August. The windless heated days of Latmos in *Endymion*, the twilight of the gods in *Hyperion*, need some tonic reinforcing element; and this is supplied by the Elizabethan models, which, without diminishing in any way the florid beauty of the verse, give it an underlying vigour to counteract its superficial languor.

His obligation to Spenser.

Keats is thus the direct channel through which the influence of the Elizabethan age is transmitted to modern English poetry. He is, like Spenser and Coleridge and Shelley, a "poet's poet," but the extent of his influence is not confined to poets; it spreads itself over the thought of his century. If we sum up the work of our great romantic poets of this period we shall find that, while Byron excited a temporary enthusiasm unlike anything before or after, the two abiding forces of the time

Obligations of later poets to Keats. Keats and Wordsworth.

were Wordsworth and Keats. In one sense these two are at opposite poles. Wordsworth, the poet of abstract thought, merged the concrete beauty of nature in intellect; Keats, on the contrary, appealed primarily to the senses, and dwelt on form and colour to the exclusion of anything less substantial. However, we must not make too much of the antithesis. If, at this particular time, the work of the two was distinct, there came a later day at which their unity was an established and obvious fact. In works so different as Matthew Arnold's *Thyrsis* and Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, we see Keats' standard of form and outward beauty coalescing with the spiritual reflectiveness of Wordsworth in complete harmony, the aloofness of the one tempered by the glowing humanity of the other. The human passions and personality which Keats gave to his gods, his intense joy in beautiful things because they were beautiful to the eye—these and other like qualities are the fountain-head of that apparent stream of objective pleasure which moves through all the work of subsequent poets. We may connect him especially with Rossetti and what may be called the "pre-Raffaellite" school in modern poetry. If Rossetti's sensuous Italianism is his own, he is none the less related to Keats as Keats is to Spenser. And, in Rossetti and William Morris and Mr. Swinburne alike, we must reckon with the influence of that astonishing and solitary little masterpiece, *La Belle Dame sans Mercy*, composed in a moment of leisure and little accounted of by its author. In a day when a false Gothicism was the rage, when even Scott, with his array of medieval scholarship, was bound to the prevalent taste, to meet anything so entirely true as this, and in so unexpected a place, is a rare pleasure. In a word, the place of Keats in our literature is due to his strangely complete appreciation of his models combined with an originality which made him the proper vehicle of their transmission to a subsequent age. At his best he is without a rival, and even his faults have a kind of perfection.

§ 9. These three great poets have their satellites, and a place must be found here for THOMAS MOORE, the friend and biographer of Byron. He was born in Dublin, and went to Trinity College, where he met Robert Emmet and imbibed his revolutionary doctrines. What Moore called "the frightful explosion" of 1798 changed his views as to open rebellion, but he remained an ardent opponent of religious and political ascendency. He graduated in 1798, and early in 1799 went to London to study law in the Temple, and to publish his translation of the *Odes of Anacreon*, which he dedicated to his future bugbear, the Prince Regent. He had qualities which made him the darling of fashionable society—a great talent for conversation, an agreeable voice, and enough musical skill to give effect to his rendering of his own songs. His character perhaps suffered from his

THOMAS MOORE (1779–1852). *Life.*

delight in the admiration of society; he became something of a parasite, living near his patrons—as at Kegworth, where he was close to Lord Moira at Donington Park, and afterwards at Sloperton, hard by Lord Lansdowne's seat of Bowood. In 1803 he received the appointment of Admiralty Registrar in the Bermudas, and travelled for some time in America, after which he appointed a deputy and returned home. Some poems written during this tour appeared in his *Odes and Epistles* (1806), which were seriously criticised by Jeffrey on the ground of immorality. Moore sent his critic a challenge; but the police stopped the duel, and the enemies became friends. A similar challenge, arising out of Byron's mockery in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, led to another friendship. In 1807 Moore made a fortune by the publication of his *Irish Melodies*, with music by Sir John Stevenson, for each of which he received one hundred guineas. Four years later he married Miss Bessie Dyke of Kilkenny, a young actress. In private life Moore was a good and affectionate husband, and his excellent and beautiful wife "received from him the homage of a lover from the hour of their nuptials to that of his dissolution." His publications after his marriage were very numerous, and some of them proved immensely successful. In 1817 *Lalla Rookh* appeared, and, two years later, Moore, whose deputy in the Bermudas had embezzled a large sum of money and fled, was obliged to take refuge in Paris and attempt to make up the sum by the earnings of his pen. He was ultimately forgiven the debt by payment of a fraction of the large amount embezzled. While abroad he visited Byron at Venice, and received from him the famous roll of Memoirs. These were sold to Murray for publication, but were afterwards taken back and burned by Moore, whose own *Life of Byron* came out in 1830 and was followed by a complete edition of Byron under his auspices. In 1835 Moore received a literary pension of £300, and in 1850 received a further pension of £100 from the Civil List. He died in 1852, bereaved of all his family but his wife, and was buried at Bromham, near Devizes. Mrs. Moore died in 1865.

§ 10. Moore's work may be roughly divided into lyric poetry; political squibs of great originality and excellence; narrative poems, of which the chief are *Lalla Rookh* and *The Loves of the Angels*; a novel, *The Epicurean*, published at first as a poem and called *Alciphron*; and three biographies, of Sheridan, Byron, and the unfortunate Irish patriot Lord Edward Fitzgerald. It is unnecessary to devote much attention either to the novel or to the biographies. *The Epicurean* deals with the early ages of Christianity and describes the conversion, under the influence of love, of a young Athenian philosopher who travels into Egypt and is initiated into the mysterious worship of Isis. The *Life of Byron* owes its merit, not so much to its style as to the painstaking use of Byron's own journals and correspondence and

His prose works: "Life of Byron" (1830).

the influence exercised by its method on subsequent works of the same kind. Nor, in point of his voluminous poetry, is Moore exactly a great writer. *Lalla Rookh*, a narrative poem consisting of four Oriental tales framed in a very graceful and gorgeously written prose romance, enjoyed a tremendous popularity at the time, but is hardly likely to find many readers now. The charming and pathetic *Paradise and the Peri* has fallen into oblivion with the rest of the story. Moore's style is too effeminate and artificial to give his stories much interest, and perhaps the best feature of *Lalla Rookh* is to be found in its occasional lyrics. *The Loves of the Angels*, which treats the mysterious and easily misunderstood subject employed by Byron in his *Heaven and Earth*, is manifestly inferior in every respect to *Lalla Rookh*. The incident of the three angels who, by yielding to an earthly love, forfeit the privileges of their celestial nature, is not only improbable, but tiresome and monotonous.

Narrative poetry: "Lalla Rookh" (1817), etc.

As an Irishman and a Liberal, Moore naturally felt intense hostility to the bigotry and tyranny which was in his day characteristic of English rule in Ireland, and expressed himself in a series of brilliant and witty lampoons, directed against the Tory party in general, and showered with stinging effect upon the Regent, Lord Eldon, Castlereagh, and all the opponents of Catholic emancipation. His satires were a new invention. Instead of coarse invective he adopted a tone of persiflage, and gave his work the air of light *vers de société*. The great merit of these brilliant pasquinades—the *Odes on Cash, Coin, and Catholics*, the *Fables for The Holy Alliance*, *The Twopenny Post-Bag*, and *The Fudge Family in Paris*—is their inexhaustible flow of quaint and ingenious ideas, and their connection of the most remote allusions with the object of attack. *The Fudge Family* is a series of letters purporting to come from France at the time of the Bourbon restoration. The letters of Mr. Fudge, a creature of Lord Castlereagh and a kind of political spy, give a bitterly ironical picture of the baseness and servility of the triumphant Royalist party. His son Bob, a dandy and epicure, writes about cookery and dress; his daughter Biddy, a frivolous romance-reading miss, describes in romantic jargon her adventures with a distinguished stranger, with whom she falls in love, imagining him to be the King of Prussia, then *incognito* in Paris, but eventually discovers him, to her horror, to be a linen-draper's shopman. *The Fudge Family*, with its animated and brilliant picture of life in Paris, and its multitude of personal and political allusions, should be read as one of the most interesting and vivacious sketches of society and politics at a very momentous epoch of European history.

Political satires: "The Fudge Family in Paris" (1817).

Moore's real distinction, however, is the place which he

occupies as the peculiarly national poet of Ireland. His lyric work, even in the elaborate and rather sensual *Anacreon*, was always good; but in the *Irish Melodies* he sometimes reaches a high level of poetry, and by his soft melancholy, his devotion to his country, and his tender and sympathetic alliance of patriotism with love under the form of allegory, he has endeared himself above every other poet to Irishmen. He supplied appropriate words to traditional tunes—Stevenson's music was merely a setting—and, in so doing, wedded phrase with melody to a surprising extent. He had not the power of Burns or Béranger, who appealed so thoroughly to the popular feeling of their countrymen; but he touched the universal sentiments of Irishmen, and his popularity is proportionately great. He had also a certain range of expression, and these lyrics have some degree of variety. It is not very difficult to see that the author of "Avenging and bright falls the swift sword of Erin," and of "Love's young dream," is one and the same person; but the chord touched by either poem is different. And, allowing for a fatal and often detestable exaggeration of sentiment, a frequent triviality of manner, and serious faults of taste, this body of lyric poetry is one of the best that any nation can boast. Moore's other lyrics—the *National* and *Sacred Songs*—have the same merits and drawbacks. Of the *Sacred Songs*, the *Song of Miriam* has something of the fire which is so conspicuous in Byron's *Hebrew Melodies*. But, when we have given Moore credit for writing good songs, the fact remains that their fastidious finish and their perilous approach to inanity of phrase lead to the final judgment that they are a little less than lyric, and that not all their excellence can hide their relation to the modern drawing-room song.

Lyric verse: "Irish Melodies" (1807).

§ 11. Two more poets must be mentioned—for Leigh Hunt and Landor belong to prose rather than poetry, although both of them were distinguished poets. SAMUEL ROGERS is a worthy and rather dull figure in literature. He was the son of a banker living at Newington Green, and inherited from him a fortune which gave him the opportunity, after learning the business, of retiring and devoting himself to the pursuit of literature and to the cultivation of statesmen and men of letters. He was not a very amiable person, and his wealth doubtless assisted him in his disregard of politeness; but he secured the attachment of his friends, and, during his long life, gained no small reputation as a poet. His *Pleasures of Memory* (1792), written in the couplet-form, to which he remained faithful, had many admirers, and was followed by *Columbus* (1810), *Jacqueline* (1814)—which appeared in the odd company of Byron's *Lara—Human Life* (1819), and *Italy* (1822). Rogers wrote neatly and correctly, but his form cannot be said to be a great advance on the form of the eighteenth century, although his point of view was

SAMUEL ROGERS (1763–1855).

vaguely romantic. He was certainly a *virtuoso* and man of taste, and most people will remember Mr. Ruskin's early and lasting admiration for Rogers and his *Italy*.

The other poet is the once overpraised and now underrated THOMAS CAMPBELL. Campbell, like Rogers, was in fairly comfortable circumstances for most of his life, although his father, a Glasgow merchant related to the house of Argyll, had lost his fortune in the disturbances of the American war. At Glasgow University Campbell distinguished himself by his translations of the Greek poets. In 1799, when he was only in his twenty-second year, his *Pleasures of Hope* was published, and created an enthusiasm as hearty as the clamour which greeted the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* and *Childe Harold*. Shortly afterwards he travelled abroad, and saw warlike scenes and battlefields which suggested some noble lyrics. To the seventh edition of *The Pleasures of Hope*, published in 1802, was added *Ye Mariners of England*, while *Lochiel's Warning* and the magnificent verses on *Hohenlinden* were published together shortly after. In 1803 he settled in London, married, and began to pursue literature as his exclusive profession. His works were written chiefly for the booksellers. His principal volumes of poetry after this time were *Gertrude of Wyoming*, (1809), *Theodric* (1824), and *The Pilgrim of Glencoe* (1842). Meanwhile, he became a very distinguished person, and the University of Glasgow made him its Lord Rector. In 1843 he retired to Boulogne, and died there the year after. His body was brought to England and interred in Westminster Abbey.

THOMAS CAMPBELL (1777–1844).

It is to his descriptive lyrics, which are among the finest in any language, that Campbell will owe his lasting fame. They speak for themselves, and need no criticism. Otherwise, his position in the poetry of his time is identical with that of Rogers. *The Pleasures of Hope* is of the eighteenth century, formal and Johnsonian. It shows the following of Goldsmith's *Traveller* and *Deserted Village*, not merely in its metre, but in the manner of its reflections. And, to the end, although susceptible to the fascinations of the romantic school, Campbell retained the old fetters willingly. Just as in Blake we have a romantic poet far in advance of his age, so in Campbell and Rogers we have the relics of a past era surviving in the company of a new school of verse with which they only sympathised by force of circumstances They are actually poets of the transition from the classical to the romantic period. *The Pleasures of Memory* and *The Pleasures of Hope* belong to the same class of poetry as *The Task*; and, when we take into account the fire and rhythmical majesty of lyrics like *Hohenlinden*, it should not be forgotten that Cowper, in his ode on the *Loss of the Royal George*, had done something already of very

Transitional features of Campbell's and Rogers' poetry.

Campbell's lyrics.

much the same kind. The subjective lyric, the lyric of passion and nature in conjunction, was beyond Campbell's power. He just contrived, by bold and spirited verse, to appeal to the taste of the nineteenth century; but in the procession of poets he was behind his time.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

OTHER POETS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY (TO 1850).

The names and work of the writers included in the following summary are somewhat heterogeneous. The obvious difficulty in classifying the poets of a very fertile century arises from the fact that many of them seem to illustrate no principle of evolution or progress. Some are mere imitators, some are original in an unexpected and baffling way, others are glib writers who have very little to say for themselves, and write because they have an indiscriminate facility for making verses about nothing. In the present case we have taken together those poets, dramatists, and writers of verse who died during the first half of the century, with the exception of Hood and Praed, and one or two others whose work, in its distinct individuality, calls for our attention later. On the other hand, this seems to be the proper place for one or two writers, like Mr. Justice Talfourd and Sheridan Knowles, who, although they survived the limit of 1850, emphatically belong to the earlier period.

The list opens with the name of JOANNA BAILLIE (1762–1851), niece of the celebrated doctor John Hunter. She was the daughter of a Presbyterian minister at Bothwell, near Glasgow, but spent the greater part of her life at Hampstead, where she and her sister kept house together. She wrote a number of respectable and mediocre dramas, both in tragedy and comedy, the chief of which are the series known as *Plays on the Passions* (1798–1812). *Basil* and *De Monfort* are the best—the second of these achieved some success on the stage—but Miss Baillie's dramatic theory was essentially vapid and unreal, and her incident was of a second-rate theatrical type, reminiscent to some extent of Mrs. Radcliffe in her less horror-struck mood. These plays have altogether disappeared from the modern stage; and, although the curious reader may still find them in the cabinet editions of plays which lurk on the upper shelves of libraries, he will find that his sense of duty will be amply satisfied when he has glanced through two or three.

BERNARD BARTON (1784–1849) was a member of the Society of Friends, and, attracting some attention on that account, became known as the Quaker poet. He was a friend of many of the literary men of his day, and especially of Charles Lamb. His daughter married Edward Fitzgerald. He published in 1812 a volume with the portentous title of *Metrical Effusions*; this was succeeded by *Napoleon and other Poems* (1822), *Poetic Vigils* (1824), and *Devotional Verses* (1826). Numerous other pieces appeared separately and in magazines.

THOMAS HAYNES BAYLY (1797–1839) has a certain, and, in our more exacting day, rather ludicrous reputation as an author of drawing-room songs. The sentiments of *The Soldier's Tear*, *She Wore a Wreath of Roses*, *I'd be a Butterfly*, *Oh no, we never mention her*, and *We met —'twas in a crowd*, are unexceptionable, but these pieces do not add to the treasures of the English lyric.

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD (1766–1823) was the son of a tailor at Honington, near Bury St. Edmunds, and

worked as a shoemaker in London. His poetry was rejected by the London booksellers, but was published at Bury, a gentleman named Capel Lofft undertaking the expense. His chief poems were *The Farmer's Boy* (1800), and *Rural Tales* (1802)—all smooth, correct, and unimpressive. He was patronised by the Duke of Grafton, whose seat of Euston was close to Bloomfield's birthplace. In 1823 he died, partially insane, at Shefford in Bedfordshire.

CAROLINE ANNE BOWLES (1786–1854) has already been mentioned as the second Mrs. Southey. She was born and died at Lymington in Hampshire, which was her home during all her life, save for the four years of her marriage. She wrote several rather undistinguished poems, including *Ellen Fitzarthur* (1820) and *Tales of the Factories* (1823); her chief work in fiction is *Chapters on Churchyards* (1829). She certainly would have remained in obscurity had it not been for the patronage which her future husband gracefully, but not very wisely, extended to all minor poets.

WILLIAM LISLE BOWLES (1762–1850) was born at King's Sutton, on the borders of Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire, and was educated at Winchester and Trinity College, Oxford. He took Holy Orders and obtained in 1804 the valuable living of Bremhill in Wiltshire; he also was a prebendary, and afterwards a canon residentiary of Salisbury. His *Fourteen Sonnets* (1789) exercised a tremendous influence on Coleridge, who, unable to buy the book, made transcripts of it and presented them to his friends. In some way, therefore, Bowles may be said to have quickened the genius of the Lake Poets; but, were it not for this, the reader of the sonnets, which were increased in number later on, would proclaim their author a very dull bard with a somewhat artificial sense of the picturesque. The later works of the Rector of Bremhill, *The Missionary of the Andes* (1815), *The Village Verse-Book* (1837), etc., have no claims to a like distinction. His edition (1806) of Pope, in which he found an uncongenial occupation, was the origin of the famous controversy as to whether Pope was a poet. Byron, in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, distinguished Bowles with a volume of unnecessary abuse.

The great statesman, GEORGE CANNING (1770–1827), claims a place in English literature on account of his contributions to the famous *Anti-Jacobin Review* (1799–1801). His *Loves of the Triangles*—a parody on Darwin's *Loves of the Plants*—the *Needy Knife-Grinder*, the *Inscription on Mrs. Brownrigg*—a mocking imitation of Southey's inscription on Henry Marten the regicide—and the *U-Niversity of Gottingen*, are all very amusing and will long possess admirers. He was aided in the *Poetry of the Anti-Jacobin* by John Hookham Frere (see below). Canning's powers in serious poetry are shown in such pieces as *Ulm and Trafalgar*, and his noble and affecting lines on his son's death in 1820.

HENRY FRANCIS CARY (1772–1844), of Christ Church, Oxford, assistant librarian in the British Museum, published in 1805 a blank-verse translation of Dante's *Inferno*, and in 1812 completed the whole of the *Divine Comedy*. This version, even in our own day, when the study of Dante has been so much extended, remains one of the best, and bears testimony to a praiseworthy and accurate scholarship and a real talent for poetry.

HARTLEY COLERIDGE (1796–1849), eldest son of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, was educated at Ambleside and Merton College, Oxford, and obtained a fellowship at Oriel. His manner of life was, however, a little, although not very, irregular; and, when stories of drunkenness got about, the College deprived him of his distinction. A somewhat indolent person, he wrote casually for *Blackwood*, and, after some wandering, settled down at Grasmere with nothing to live on. His unsatisfactoriness was very superficial, but there can be little doubt that he wasted his genius; and his brother Derwent's memoir of him, prefixed to the posthumous edition of his

works (1851), is of the nature of an apology. Hartley Coleridge's chief works were *Poems*, *Essays*, and the considerable *Biographia Borealis* (1833).

SARA COLERIDGE (1802–1852) was the youngest of Coleridge's children, and wrote verses worthy of remark. She married in 1829 her cousin, Henry Nelson Coleridge. Her original poetry is scanty and is dispersed throughout the fairy-tale called *Phantasmion* (1837); but the dissertations which she appended to many of her father's posthumous works are remarkable both for power of thought and expression.

GEORGE CROLY (1780–1860) was a native of Dublin and rector of St. Stephen's, Walbrook. He had a fertile imagination and gorgeous style. His chief poems were *Paris in 1815* (1817), *The Angel of the World* (1820), and *The Modern Orlando* (1846). He also wrote eloquent and fanciful romances—*Salathiel* (1829), *Tales of the Great St. Bernard* (1829), and *Marston* (1846).

Scottish poetry—or, rather, song-writing—is well represented by ALLAN CUNNINGHAM (1784–1842), a Dumfriesshire peasant who pursued the trade of a stone-mason and worked under Sir Francis Chantrey. He carried on, in company with two or three poets whose names will be found in this list, the tradition of song inherited from Burns. In prose he wrote the *Lives of the Painters* (1829–33), and other books.

GEORGE DARLEY (1795–1846), the editor (1840) of Beaumont and Fletcher, possessed a lyric faculty which was rated very highly by some of his contemporaries. He was a member of Trinity College, Dublin, and worked on *The London Magazine*. *Sylvia* (1827) is a pastoral play, a curious medley of prose and verse; but the verse is in many cases exquisite. *Nepenthe* (1839) is a rather inferior poem, but retains much of the same brilliant manner. Darley may be said to have inherited something of the lightness and grace of the Elizabethan lyric, as Beddoes inherited its uncanny mystery.

EBENEZER ELLIOTT (1781–1849), the "Corn-law Rhymer," was the son of a clerk in an ironfoundry at Masborough, near Rotherham, and became himself an ironmaster at Sheffield. He published some poems at intervals between 1798 and 1830 which showed a considerable sense of the picturesque, and here and there some lyric ability. The *Corn-Law Rhymes* (1831) were for the most part intemperate and thoroughly vulgar; their vulgarity no doubt was the chief quality which endeared them to the mob. Elliott was praised by Southey, Bulwer, Wilson, and Carlyle; but it must be owned that, even if we allow him the possession of real poetical qualities, he stands in a very minor rank of poets.

JOHN HOOKHAM FRERE (1769–1846), the friend of Canning, whom he assisted in the *Anti-Jacobin Review*, was *chargé d'affaires* in Spain with Sir John Moore, and afterwards Resident at Malta, where he died. He was the author of the once celebrated satiric poem, published in 1817, entitled *Prospectus and Specimen of an intended National Work, by William and Robert Whistlecraft, etc.* It was written in *ottava rima*, and was a clever burlesque of romantic writings, with here and there a touch of real poetry. It was the model on which Byron wrote *Beppo* and afterwards *Don Juan*. Frere was also the author of an *Ode on Æthelstan's Victory* (at Brunanburh), published by Ellis (1801) as a fourteenth-century production, but really written when Frere was at school at Eton, and the great discussion on Rowley and Chatterton was taking place. He also made an admirable translation into English verse of the *Acharnians*, *Knights*, *Birds*, and *Frogs* of Aristophanes, published in 1839 and 1840.

JAMES GRAHAME (1765–1811), a native of Glasgow, at first a barrister, and afterwards a well-known Anglican clergyman, published in 1801 a dramatic poem called *Mary Queen of Scotland*. This was followed by *The Sabbath*, *Sabbath Walks* (both 1804), and other poems of a religious character. Grahame was neither an easy nor a graceful poet; and, although his verse is full of tender and devout feeling, it has little vigour or imagination.

REGINALD HEBER (1783–1826) was born at Malpas in Cheshire, educated at Brasenose, and became vicar of Hodnet. He was appointed to the bishopric of Calcutta in 1823, and died at Trichinopoly three years later. He was Bampton Lecturer in 1815, and wrote a life of Jeremy Taylor (1822) for an edition of that divine's works. In poetry his most famous work is the beautiful passage in his Newdigate prize poem of *Palestine* (1807), describing the building of the Temple. He also wrote a fair amount of sacred verse, and one or two famous hymns, including *From Greenland's icy mountains*.

FELICIA DOROTHEA HEMANS (*née* Browne—1793–1835) had once a reputation which has utterly vanished. She was a native of Liverpool, and spent the early part of her life in North Wales, not far from Abergele. Her poetry began early; and, when her first important book, *Domestic Affections* (1812), was published, she, although only in her nineteenth year, had been in print before. In the same year she married Captain Hemans. They separated for some reason or other before very long. Mrs. Hemans was fortunate in her competition for prizes. *Bruce and Wallace* (1819) and *Dartmoor* (1821) were both selected from a number of poems on the same subject. A play called *The Vespers of Palermo* (1823) was not successful. Other works quickly followed: *The Forest Sanctuary* (1825), *Records of Women* (1828), *Songs of the Affections* (1830). Towards the end of her life she lived at Dublin with her brother, and published there in 1834 her *Hymns for Childhood* and *Scenes and Hymns of Life*, with a few sonnets entitled *Thoughts during Sickness*. Her style was graceful, but presented, as Scott said, "too many flowers for the fruit." Her insipid prettinesses have the minimum of intellectual and emotional force. One or two of her pieces are well known from their domestic simplicity, but, considering the volume of her writings, her loss of credit is entire.

WILLIAM HERBERT (1778–1847), son of the first Earl of Carnarvon, and Dean of Manchester, was in early life a lawyer, and had been in Parliament before taking Holy Orders. He was an industrious translator from a variety of languages, wrote two original poems—*Helga* (1815) and *Attila* (1838)—besides tales, sermons, and scientific treatises.

JAMES HOGG (1770–1835), known better as the "Ettrick Shepherd" of Wilson's *Noctes Ambrosianæ*, was born in Ettrick Vale, Selkirkshire. His school was the mountain's side, where he kept the cattle and sheep. His education was scanty, but he had great natural gifts, a quick and attentive memory, and a thorough appreciation of natural scenery. In 1801 he published a small volume of songs, and in 1807 *The Mountain Bard*. Soon afterwards he left his occupation and resided at Edinburgh, supporting himself entirely by his pen. *The Queen's Wake* (1813) brought him into very favourable notice, and was followed by *Madoc of the Moor* (1816), *Jacobite Relics* (1820), etc. His chief delight was in legendary tales and folk-lore. He helped Scott in collecting the *Border Minstrelsy*; and his whole work shows the dominant influence of fancy. His extraordinary novels and tales, including the wonderful *Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824), are all of this type. A modern critic says, "He wanted art to construct a fable, and taste to give due effect to his imagery and conceptions. But there are few poets who impress us so much with the idea of direct inspiration, and that poetry is indeed an art 'unteachable and untaught.'"

JAMES SHERIDAN KNOWLES (1784–1862), dramatist, was born at Cork in 1784, and went on the stage as an actor. On retiring from the theatre he occupied himself with teaching elocution and sometimes preaching in chapels. *Caius Gracchus* (1815) was his first play, and was succeeded by *Virginius* (1820)—which is still performed in the provinces—*William Tell* (1825), and others. In comedy he wrote *The Hunchback* (1832) and *The Love Chase* (1837); and, beside these, he was the author of two novels. *George*

Lovell (1846) and *Henry Fortescue* (1847). His plots, everything considered, are fairly natural and his characters are well sustained. On the whole, without a spark of genius, he occupies a prominent place in the undistinguished theatrical record of his time.

LETITIA ELIZABETH LANDON, better known as L. E. L. (1802–1838), wrote a great deal of gushing and harmlessly Byronic poetry, which, as the work of a romantic and unfortunate lady, enjoyed a great and undeserved popularity. She was the daughter of an army agent, was born at Chelsea, and married, in 1838, Mr. Maclean, governor of the Gold Coast in West Africa. She went out with him to Cape Coast Castle, and accidentally poisoned herself there two months after landing.

JOHN LEYDEN (1775–1811) was the author of certain *Poetical Remains*, published in 1819, under the editorship of the Rev. James Morton. Sir Walter Scott was his friend and spoke in high terms of his poetry. Leyden had written for *The Edinburgh Magazine*, and in 1798 became a Presbyterian preacher; but subsequently he entered the East India Company's service as a surgeon. A man of great learning, he mastered several Oriental languages while in India. He accompanied Lord Minto in the expedition against Java, and died there in 1811.

JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN (1803–1849) was an Irish poet whose life was irregular and unhappy. His poetry was eminently patriotic, and had besides a curiously mystic and religious flavour which has fascinated many critics—and especially Celtic critics—of recent years. As to the noble and unusual lyric of *Dark Rosaleen*—a strange personification of Ireland—there cannot be two opinions. Mangan had, however, very little control of metrical form, and, even at his best, could produce distressingly bad lines.

JAMES MONTGOMERY (1771–1854), the Moravian editor of the *Sheffield Iris*, and in every way an excellent man, wrote during his lifetime a very large amount of melodious verse which is almost poetry. His books have exotic and strange titles —*The West Indies* (1809), which dealt with the abolition of the slave trade; *The World before the Flood* (1812), a prehistoric epic; *Greenland* (1819); and *The Pelican Island* (1826). Montgomery's philanthropy and liberalism brought him into hot water, and, in his early manhood, he was twice imprisoned for libel. He was a sound if not very original critic, and his lectures on poetry at the Royal Institution (1830–1) were successful. In 1835 he received a pension of £150 from Peel. Perhaps his chief claim to distinction resides in some of his beautiful hymns, published in 1853. Of these one or two, including *For ever with the Lord*, are classic. He must be carefully distinguished from the unspeakable ROBERT MONTGOMERY (1807–1855), whose trash in *The Omnipresence of the Deity* (1828) and *Satan* (1830) gained a notorious immortality in the scathing criticism written by Macaulay for the *Edinburgh*. Montgomery took Holy Orders, and was minister, during the last twelve years of his life, of a proprietary chapel in St. Pancras.

WILLIAM MOTHERWELL (1797–1835) was a Scotsman who made some mark in journalism, wrote some Scottish songs, and took an interest in old legends and ballads. Unlike his contemporaries, Tannahill and Thom, his work is not wholly derivative from Burns; and the best part of it has a close kinship to Scott's work in the ballad and popular tale.

JOHN O'KEEFFE (1747–1833) really belongs, as a dramatist and writer of songs, to the age of Sheridan and Cumberland. He was an Irishman, was born at Dublin, and died at Southampton. His whole life was prolific in farces and operettas, and he had a genuine, although rather coarse, comic touch. Several of his songs, such as *The Thorn*, that very shallow and inane lyric, and the Bacchic invocation, *Flow thou regal purple stream*, are distantly remembered by the compilers of song-books, but their position in such miscellanies is merely perfunctory and traditional.

ROBERT POLLOK (1798–1827), a native of North Moorhouse in Renfrewshire, a student of Glasgow, and a minister of the United Secession Church, wrote a somewhat bombastic poem on Calvinistic lines, which he called *The Course of Time* (1827), and, in prose, *Tales of the Covenanters* (1824–5). Admirers consider *The Course of Time* Miltonic, and it certainly has some grandeur; but most readers will prefer Milton undiluted by Pollok.

BRYAN WALLER PROCTER, better known as BARRY CORNWALL (1787–1874), was a very amiable and sociable man, a member of the "Cockney school," and a fluent verse writer. He was the friend of Leigh Hunt and Lamb; he was the recipient of a tribute from Thackeray in the dedication of *Vanity Fair*, and lived to win the affection of Mr. Swinburne. Otherwise he was a London solicitor, and for many years a Commissioner in Lunacy. His education was received at Harrow, and in his edition (1838) of Ben Jonson—the only edition which for many years commanded a popular price—he approved himself a scholar. His *Dramatic Scenes* (1819) and *The Flood in Thessaly* (1823) were not very brilliant, but his *English Songs* (1832) won him some fame. These, however, have a very distant cousinship to poetry; and *The Sea! the Sea! the open Sea!*—written by a notoriously bad sailor—as a typical specimen, bears out this assertion. It must be owned that the regard of his brother-poets and men of letters for the sincere and upright Procter as a man tinged their criticism of his verse.

It seems illiberal to leave the name of HENRY JAMES PYE (1745–1813), Poet Laureate for twenty-three years, without some mention. However, if any writer of verse could be more colourless than Hayley and more imbecile than Robert Merry, the notorious "Della Crusca," it was this hopeless poetaster. The list of laureates provokes some amusement in the most reverent breast; but, compared with Pye, Tate, Eusden, and even Whitehead, rise to Olympic heights. Byron's lines in *The Vision of Judgment*, where George III's ghost exclaims—

> "What, what! Pye come again? No more, no more of that!"

contain a pregnant and immortal criticism.

WILLIAM STEWART ROSE (1775–1843) was celebrated as a translator. His verse translation of the first three books of *Amadis de Gaul* appeared in 1803, the year of Southey's prose version of the same romance, and from 1823 to 1831 he published his well-known translation of the *Orlando Furioso*.

JAMES SMITH (1775–1839), known best in connection with his brother HORACE SMITH (1779–1849), wrote clever parodies and criticisms in *The Picnic*, *The London Review*, and *The Monthly Mirror*. In the last appeared those joint imitations of Horace by the brothers which were published in 1813 as *Horace in London*. In 1812, at the opening of the new Drury Lane Theatre, they published their volume of *Rejected Addresses*—one of the best collections of parodies that has ever appeared. James wrote the imitations of Wordsworth, Cobbett, Southey, Coleridge, and Crabbe; Horace, those of Byron, Scott, Moore, "Monk" Lewis, Fitzgerald, and Dr. Johnson. James did little more in the way of literature beyond an occasional piece in some of the monthlies. Lady Blessington said that "if James Smith had not been a wealthy man he would have been a great man." Horace wrote far more voluminously than his brother, attempting novels and verses. *Brambletye House* (1826) was in imitation of Scott; and, beside this, he wrote *The Tor Hill* (1826), *Walter Colyton* (1830), *The Moneyed Man* (1841), and several others. Some parts of his poem, *An Address to the Mummy*, show excellent poetic taste.

WILLIAM SOTHEBY (1757–1833), born in London and educated at Harrow, was for some time in the army, but retired in 1780 and devoted himself to literature. He was a man of great learning and translated with much elegance and skill. His chief

works were: a *Poetical Description of Wales* (1790), a *Translation of Virgil's Georgics* (1800), *Constance de Castille* (1810), written after the style of Scott's romantic poems, translations of the *Iliad* (1831) and the *Odyssey* (1832). He also published a creditable translation of Wieland's *Oberon* (1798).

SIR THOMAS NOON TALFOURD (1795–1854) was born at Reading, rose to distinction at the bar, and was made a judge in 1849. He died on the bench while addressing the Grand Jury at Stafford in 1854. He wrote the tragedies of *Ion* (1836), *The Athenian Captive* (1838), *Glencoe* (1840), and *The Castilian* (1853); while in prose his works include the *Memorials* (1837–48) of his friend Charles Lamb, *Vacation Rambles* (1845), and an *Essay on the Greek Drama*. He is best known by the tragedy of *Ion*, a very striking closet-drama; and it will be remembered that it was to him that Dickens inscribed *Pickwick* and Browning dedicated *Pippa Passes*.

ROBERT TANNAHILL (1774–1810) is one of the Scottish bards who inherited something of Burns' genius in song-writing. He was a weaver, had a somewhat unhappy life, and drowned himself at Paisley. Of his lyrics, the one beginning "Keen blaws the wind ower the braes of Gleniffer," is a good specimen.

The literary society of Norwich, in many ways the most intellectually remarkable of our provincial towns, is represented by WILLIAM TAYLOR (1765–1836), who translated some of the works of Goethe, Schiller, and Lessing, and gave a great impulse to the study of German literature in England.

WILLIAM TENNANT (1784–1848) was a Fifeshire schoolmaster who became a professor at St. Andrews. In 1812 he published a clever mock-heroic poem in *ottava rima*, called *Anster* (*i.e.* Anstruther) *Fair*, which is curious, not merely on account of its humour, but as offering an example of a style and manner anticipating, if not suggesting, those of the more celebrated Whistlecrafts (see above, in connection with John H. Frere). If it really suggested this production, Tennant may be regarded as the literary grandparent of *Beppo* and *Don Juan*.

WILLIAM THOM (1798?–1848) belonged to this generation of Scotch songsters, and was the author of some charming lyrics. Like Tannahill, he was a weaver by trade.

MARY TIGHE (1772–1810), born in the county of Wicklow, wrote a poem called *Psyche* (1805), which was founded on the famous story of Cupid and Psyche in Apuleius. Mrs. Tighe showed some imagination and graceful fancy.

SIR AUBREY HUNT DE VERE (1788–1846) was an Irish country gentleman of county Limerick, who changed his name from Hunt to De Vere in 1832. He became a friend and correspondent of Wordsworth, who generously called his *Sonnets* "the most perfect of our age." His dramatic poem *Julian the Apostate* (1822), and his regular drama, *Mary Tudor* (1847), are also to be had in remembrance. He is not, of course, to be confused with his son and namesake, the author of the *Legends of St. Patrick*.

An exaggerated fame used to be attached to the poems of HENRY KIRKE WHITE (1785–1806), the son of a Nottingham butcher, who showed some precocity in verse-making and attracted Southey's attention. He was deeply moved by the Evangelical revival in the Church of England, and, making the acquaintance of Charles Simeon, the famous fellow of King's, gained, through his influence, a sizarship at St. John's College, Cambridge. He intended to take Holy Orders, and showed great promise; but on October 19, 1806, he died in his college rooms. Southey published his *Remains* (1807) with a memoir. His pathetic history added to the supposed merit of his poetry, and even Byron, in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, made him a favourable exception from the general blame. This was probably due to a tenderness for him as a Nottinghamshire man. White's longest poem was the descriptive piece called *Clifton Grove* (1803). The character of his verse, if smooth and melo-

dious, is fatally mawkish; and, as a rule, his lines have a frigid, manneristic turn which reminds one of the utterly uninspired poetry of the Brontës.

CHARLES WOLFE (1791–1823), an Irishman and a clergyman, was a man of one poem. His Remains were collected and published in 1825, but his one claim to celebrity is the fine *Burial of Sir John Moore* (1817).

FRANCIS WRANGHAM (1769-1842), Archdeacon of Cleveland and afterwards of the East Riding, was the author of some translations from the classical poets and of other writings in verse and prose which are often quoted by writers of his own day.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE RISE OF THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY NOVEL—1780–1850.

§ 1. Sudden interval in the history of the novel. Distinction between romance and the novel proper. § 2. The lady novelists: FRANCES BURNEY. § 3. MARIA EDGEWORTH. § 4. JANE AUSTEN and the revival of the novel. § 5. Scottish novelists: SUSAN FERRIER and JOHN GALT. § 6. MARY RUSSELL MITFORD, HARRIET MARTINEAU. § 7. The Radical novelists: WILLIAM GODWIN, ROBERT BAGE, and THOMAS HOLCROFT. § 8. THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK. § 9. Military and naval novelists: CAPTAIN MARRYAT, CHARLES LEVER, and MICHAEL SCOTT. § 10. LORD LYTTON. § 11. BENJAMIN DISRAELI. § 12. CHARLES DICKENS. § 13. General characteristics of Dickens' novels. § 14. WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY. § 15. Thackeray's humour and miscellaneous work.

The interval in fiction: Scott and the novel.

§ 1. THE great literary phenomenon of the nineteenth century is the evolution of a distinct type of English novel. The novelists of the eighteenth century were a class apart, and for many years after the publication of *Humphrey Clinker* English fiction walked in twilight. The tale of terror, to which we already have referred, cannot be sincerely regarded as literature; it had certainly none of the legitimate characteristics of fiction which are obvious in the work of Fielding. It held up the looking-glass to no actual state of society, but preferred to mirror phantoms and chimeras. Again, the immense popularity of Scott, while it roused the public to the appreciation of true fiction, diverted their attention for the time being from one evident duty of the novel—the accurate delineation of contemporary manners. It is true that Scott was an admirer, and at first a follower of Fielding, and we must not forget that in *The Antiquary* and *St. Ronan's Well*, to mention only two of his novels, he achieved *genre* paintings worthy of the greatest of English novelists. But the machinery of his novels was always romantic; in his hands contemporary society received a medieval colour, and lost, as a whole, a great part of its reality. If, in *The Antiquary*, Jonathan Oldbuck and Edie Ochiltree are real types drawn with surprising accuracy, nothing, on the other hand, could be more removed from

reality than the plot. A young gentleman, violently in love with a young lady, and deeply sensitive to his own supposed illegitimacy, spends his army furlough in hanging about her neighbourhood, meeting her at picnics, and rescuing her life. After a somewhat intricate story, in which the lady's father is hoodwinked and impoverished by a German impostor, the dying confessions of a mysterious old woman establish the fact that a local earl's problematic son, supposed to be illegitimate and dead, was really born in lawful wedlock; and, of course, the contents of a sealed packet successfully demonstrate that Miss Wardour's lover is the gentleman in question. Thus, all obstacles removed, they marry, and live happily ever after. All this, with its minor accessories, is very thin; its atmosphere is legalised romance; everything takes place upon an ideal plane, where everybody and everything live, move, and have their being in a manner incompatible—unless by a strange subversion of the laws of life—with reality. In such cases we know exactly what is going to happen. If the lover adventures on a morning walk in the hope of meeting his mistress, he will twice be reduced to despair, but the third time will crown his perseverance; sensible of his unworthiness and inferior position, he will chivalrously surrender all hope of the lady and go to America; but in the far West he will meet the missing or unsuspected individual whose testimony supplies the necessary proof of his identity and sends him back to England on the wings of hope. This is the view of life which inevitably appeals to the general reader; and it is unnecessary to say that a century after the romantic revolution, when the pendulum has swung almost as far in the opposite direction, the tradition still holds good with the great mass of the public.

Scott used this flimsy machinery as no one else could have used it; he created with it a series of masterpieces of story-telling. This is as high a tribute as can be paid to his genius; he found imitators, but not a single follower whose name is more than a curiosity of literature. His general influence upon fiction is not to be disputed. It was Scott who gave it an entirely new tone, who purged it of its coarseness, who gave subsequent novelists lessons in the art of objective description, who destroyed the cult of sentimentalism, and breathed a new life into every part of it. More than all, he created an infinite variety of character; and it was in the creation of character, in the distinction between men, not as types, but as separate organisms, that the power of all the great novelists who succeeded him lay. But the historical novel, in which he had done so great a work, languished in the course of nature; the romantic machinery on which he had relied grew old and rusty. In the whole fabric of their story the novelists of the nineteenth century derive from Fielding rather than from Scott. The main difference between the romance and the novel,

The romance and the modern novel.

properly speaking, consists in the illusion which each produces. We are persuaded that Monkbarns in *The Antiquary* is a real person, but we know that the main plot of the book is hopelessly contrary to experience. On the other hand, in all novels, properly so called, from those of Fielding to those of Mr. George Meredith, we have the intimate sense that a detail here and there may exceed the probable, but that the whole is true, and is, moreover, a valuable contribution to that experience which forbids us to believe the other. The motive which lies at the root of all fiction is the same. There is no novel which does not turn upon the hinge of love; to all fiction a pair of lovers is absolutely necessary. Further, every reasonable and cheerfully-minded reader, who knows that in every-day life the course of true love may be seriously disturbed, prefers in his fiction to see the happier side of the matter; and thus the tradition of a satisfactory *dénouement* to a novel still retains its place among us. But the means to this end are very different: in the romantic novel it is attained by impossible coincidences; in the regular novel of contemporary life the melodramatic element is successfully avoided; in *Tom Jones* the real facts of the hero's parentage come to light in a perfectly natural and consistent way; in *Pride and Prejudice* no *deus ex machinâ* stratagem weds Elizabeth to Darcy; in *The Newcomes* the sorrows and separations of Clive and Ethel need no *tour de force* to bring about the ultimate result. And it must be owned that, in the present state of the novel, when there is so strong a tendency to depart from the well-trod paths, the divergence often takes place at the expense of a reality for which no amount of subjective insight on the writer's part can compensate.

§ 2. This, briefly speaking, is the character of the nineteenth-century novel. To sum up, it is a picture of contemporary life producing, in its highest forms, the illusion of reality; it is spiritually derived from Fielding, but its manner has been changed by the influence of Scott. Another curious point about it is the prominence of the female element among the new novelists. The novel of the century opens with a quartet of illustrious ladies. The work of the first of these, FRANCES BURNEY, belongs to the period just before 1800, and marks a curious intermediate stage in the history of fiction. She was the daughter of Dr. Burney, the author of the *History of Music*. Her novel of *Evelina* (1778) appeared anonymously while she was living under her father's roof, and it was not until the extraordinary success of the book had made the secret an impossibility that she revealed it to her family. In 1782 she followed up her success with *Cecilia*, a much longer novel. In 1786 she was made second keeper of the robes to Queen Charlotte, and spent a most unhappy period of five years in the royal household. In 1791 she retired to Mickleham, where she met many French refugees.

FRANCES BURNEY (1752–1840).

and, two years later, married one of them, General d'Arblay. In 1796 she published *Camilla*, and, in 1814, a very feeble novel called *The Wanderer*. She brought out a life of her father in 1832, and, ten years after, when she had been dead for two years, the first five volumes of her famous *Diaries and Letters* were published.

Originality in her work.

Miss Burney is something of a Melchisedek in fiction. Everyone knows that Macaulay made the successful discovery of "Sam Johnson or the devil" in her style, but she, fortunately, did not make *Rasselas* the model of her fiction. She simply wrote as she was moved in a manner entirely her own. As a natural result of the originality which she showed in *Evelina*, her subsequent work deteriorated. It was impossible for a genius so independent and self-reliant to produce anything better, unless she was protected by her relation to previous models. She began to build on no foundation, and it is only the beginning of her work that is likely to retain its stability. *Cecilia* showed weaknesses and incoherencies of structure which, in *Camilla*, became serious rifts and settlements, and in *The Wanderer* brought to pass absolute ruin. *Evelina*, however, with its manifest imperfections, is a very sturdy piece of work. It was written by a girl of no experience, who had spent a very secluded youth, had read very few novels, had greedily absorbed all the unconsidered trifles of life and conversation which she had had the opportunity of noticing, and had imagined the rest for herself. Naturally, she fell into mistakes. *Evelina* is the crudest novel which has ever won a lasting reputation. The heroine is chained to an artificial refinement which is really a gross form of prudery. She is perpetually worrying herself about the delicacy of her manners and conduct; altogether, she is a silly, ecstatic "young miss" of seventeen, who betrays herself into a studied vulgarity. Her friend and benefactor, Mr. Villars, is ineffably tiresome; the society in which she moves, uncongenial to herself, is laughable to the reader, and her French grandmother, Madam Duval, is a ludicrous exaggeration. But what Miss Burney lacked in natural refinement and discrimination she supplied by her humour; there is enough acute observation in her pictures to give them a certain amount of reality; and while we are thankful that no possible opportunity can bring us to meet Mr. Villars or the unspeakable Branghtons, such scenes as the evening at Vauxhall, with the amenities of Madam Duval and the Captain, vividly imagined and vigorously executed, with a touch that has something more in it than ordinary caricature, could not easily be spared from English fiction. And, at any rate, this novel—which, by the way, is written in the form of letters—and *Cecilia*, in which the more ordinary form of narrative is adopted, are conspicuous landmarks on the way to Miss Austen's books.

"Evelina" (1778): its characteristic faults and humour.

§ 3. The second of our ladies was fifteen years younger than Miss Burney. MARIA EDGEWORTH was the daughter of an Irish country gentleman, but was born and, for the most part, educated in England. Her father was a very eccentric person, who took a great interest in French philosophy, and had peculiar views of his own on methods of education. She shared his opinions and made use of them in her *Parents' Assistant* (1796); moreover, she allowed him to retouch her books and introduce propagandist passages of his own. All her life long she wrote with a purpose, and such books as the *Moral Tales*, *Frank*, *Harry and Lucy*, and *Rosamond*, were welcomed and enjoyed by more than one generation of young readers. These stories were written in the most simple and easy language; they were full of instruction on subjects which children would not find so attractive in the ordinary manuals, and they showed not only skill in construction but a singular appreciation of little differences of character. In spite of their apparent primness and childishness these little books are the work of an artist who knew how to give an absorbing and life-like interest to her little people in their studies and pastimes. *Frank*, *Harry*, *and Lucy*, and the rest, were combined under the general heading of *Early Lessons* (1801). *The Parents' Assistant* contained a series of tales in which methods of educating growing boys and girls, and combating their errors and weaknesses, were illustrated; and some of these—for example, *Simple Susan*—are little masterpieces of style and execution. Finally, in the *Moral Tales*, *Popular Tales*, and *Tales of Fashionable Life*, she wrote for young people, warning them against the temptations to be encountered in various ranks of society. Some of her stories—*Belinda* (1801), *Leonora* (1806), and *Helen* (1834), for instance—have the length and importance of regular novels. Every one of these stories is obviously written by a woman who was seriously impressed by the dangers common to youth, and yet had too great a sense of the artistic treatment due to her work to attach the highest importance to the unmitigated and unlikely triumph of virtue, or to weary her readers with preaching to them.

MARIA EDGEWORTH (1767–1849).

However, high as the place of these tales would be under any circumstances, they would not of themselves give Miss Edgeworth her true distinction among the great novelists. *Castle Rackrent* (1800), *Ormond* (1817), and *The Absentee* (1812)—which last is included in the *Tales of Fashionable Life*—mark her out especially as the accurate and sympathetic painter of Irish manners and character. Her long life in Ireland taught her to appreciate the merits and faults of her fellow-countrymen, and especially of "the finest peasantry in the world"; and in these novels and in others, directly and indirectly, she did for the Irish character what Scott did for the Scottish. Thus, in point of subjects, there is a considerable difference between her best novels and

Her novels of Irish character.

those of Miss Austen, who devoted her attention to more or less genteel society; but she had something of the same fineness and penetration, the same microscopic insight into character, a less delicate but more obviously abundant humour, and the same power of accurate transcription. The construction of some of her stories, however, is somewhat different from that of the ordinary novel. *Castle Rackrent*, for instance, is a narrative in which we read the consecutive biographies, humorous and pathetic, of a series of Irish landlords. On the whole, we read Miss Edgeworth on account of her humour and truth to life rather than for the sake of any dramatic effect. In her writings we have the ordinary Irishman as he is, and not as he appears on the stage or in the conventional course of every-day fiction. She felt for the sufferings of her country and knew the follies and vices which had caused no small proportion of its social miseries; she described them without any great enthusiasm, but with a true capacity for hitting the point and giving her result its full value. Superficially, she is perhaps a little antiquated and out of fashion, and her stories may be the last word of the eighteenth century; but, as a writer of unparalleled force, vivacity, and consistency, as one who employed the pen of common-sense in a good cause, she emphatically belonged to the new generation of novelists which during her lifetime—she lived to be eighty-two—was achieving such success.

JANE AUSTEN (1775–1817).

§ 4. JANE AUSTEN was the daughter of a clergyman at Steventon in Hampshire. There is even less to be said of her life than can be said of Miss Edgeworth's. She lived at Bath and at various places in Hampshire, and died at Winchester when she was only forty-one. While she was quite a girl she began to write; and her first published novels, *Sense and Sensibility* (1811) and *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), were certainly in existence as more or less complete organisms long before their appearance in print. *Mansfield Park* (1814) and *Emma* (1816) were the remaining novels of her lifetime; *Northanger Abbey*, her earliest book, was not published till after her death. Her last novel, *Persuasion*, appeared with it (1818). There remain beside these two fragmentary sketches, *Lady Susan* and *The Watsons*.

Characteristics: her humour.

As years go on Miss Austen's greatness is more universally recognised. Since Fielding, no one had appeared with the same power of describing life. She had not the exuberant humour of Fielding, which harmonised so well with his out-door view of life, but she showed the same fidelity to her model, the same grasp of complex character, the same artistic handling of common things. She had a humour of her own that was more fine and subtle than Fielding's, that depended entirely on minute observations and distinctions. Her novels made no pretence to an epic character; nothing could very well be more different than Fielding's mock-Homeric rhapsodies and Miss Austen's slender,

prosaic narrative. She had very little of the romantic in her composition; love in her novels is a very matter-of-fact affair, and both parties concerned keep their eyes wide open to the marriage settlement. Her inclination was to make quiet fun of the romantic young lady who is the creature of sentiment. The heroine of *Northanger Abbey*, a very innocent and delightful girl, makes herself very foolish by her devotion to Mrs. Radcliffe's novels. In *Sense and Sensibility* the feeble Marianne is an effectual foil to the resolute Elinor. In *Pride and Prejudice* Mary, squandering her imagination on books and music which she does not understand, becomes positively odious. The fact is that Miss Austen was fortunately incapable of enthusiasm; if she had an ideal, it was the tranquil common-sense conduct of life, free from the ineptitudes and deficiencies of taste which girls like Miss Burney's Evelina sedulously cultivated. She was herself eminently of the eighteenth century. Her literary quality was Addisonian; her sense of proportion was faultless and was her safeguard against any lapse into the ridiculous. Although a romantic novelist like Scott was the first to discern her genius, her own sympathies were certainly far apart from even the sanest manifestations of romanticism. Her delight in nature was very scanty. Like the house-party in *Mansfield Park*, she enjoyed prospects and vistas, and would have preferred Shenstone's gardens at the Leasowes to the less formal beauties of the English lakes. She lived to see Byron's conquest of society, and probably thought society unspeakably silly in its mania. Nevertheless, this plain and matter-of-fact disposition does not make her work a retrograde step in English literature; on the contrary, she opened out an avenue for the nineteenth-century novel. *Mansfield Park* appeared in the same year with *Waverley*; yet Scott, starting on his great work of discovery, was really far more antiquated in his tastes and manner than this reticent young lady who found her inspiration in the contemporary tea-party. *Emma* and *The Antiquary* both belong to 1816; but *The Antiquary* is to-day a very old-fashioned novel, while *Emma* has a permanent freshness.

Her eighteenth-century quality.

Miss Austen taught future novelists that to draw the ordinary things of life is not necessarily to fall into bathos and solecism. She was content with the society which she found at Bath or Winchester, with its little interests and its casual humours. A visit to a country-house, a drive from Bath to the Wick Rocks or Clifton Downs, supplied her with the materials of adventure. A family like the immortal Bennets in *Pride and Prejudice* was a faithful and typical portrait of the middle-class household of her own time, before the increase of wealth and luxury had hopelessly mixed up all classes and separated them into two broad divisions. There is the cynical disappointed father, with his leisure and books and newspapers; the silly, tattling mother, with her

Her realism and fidelity to life.

match-making propensities and her desire for a county connection; there are the five daughters, so different in the main, and yet so unmistakably sisters. No two sisters could be more unlike than Elizabeth and Lydia; yet between them there are all the subtle ties and distinctions of family influence, indicated by a thousand delicate touches. Or again, we have the Bertram family in *Mansfield Park*, drawn no less admirably, with the same sense of mutual relation, the exact counterpart of the phenomenon which we see in every-day life and find so very difficult to explain or define. These people do little more than talk to one another about their trivial interests; once in a way they go out for a drive, or to a dance, or entertain a visitor; their life is broken by no startling events. There are elopements within Miss Austen's sphere, it is true, but they are in no sense romantic affairs. Lydia's harebrained and shameless escapade with the odious Wickham in *Pride and Prejudice* is altogether very natural; it is a calamity received by her family with a chastened sorrow, and mended by a prompt reconciliation. The elopement of Julia with Henry Crawford at the end of *Mansfield Park*, tragic as it is, is the inevitable consequence demanded by Julia's character. Where these accidents interfere with the still current of the story they fall in the natural course of events. Miss Austen never went out of her way to make an effect, and there is no profound sensation to be derived from such episodes. There are doubtless many novel readers who find in Miss Austen no stimulus to their appetite; her whole way of thinking, her appreciation of the dramatic element in common life, are foreign to their taste. After the tawdry charms of cheap fiction her light, no doubt, burns very dim to the vitiated taste; but the reader who preserves the least reverence for style and artistic method will join her evening parties and go shopping with her heroines with the utmost confidence in his company. She has created a world in which every figure lives; and, when we once have discovered her matchless qualities, the Woodhouses, the Bennets, the Bertrams, and the Dashwoods remain our inalienable friends.

Her use of satire.

A certain suspicion of caricature attaches to some of Miss Austen's observations. Her humour is quiet and demure; it is emphatically not grotesque. In such cases there is always the tendency to satire, not unfrequently mixed with the habit of reducing human nature to its lowest terms. Miss Austen is totally free from any mean form of cynicism; but her sense of the ridiculous had more scorn in it than sympathy. Her ladylike manner with its little amenities covered an intelligence which missed nothing, an ironical observation which caught every little point, a genius for detecting the slightest shade of the *mal à propos*. Her sex is proverbially penetrating; she summed up all its penetration. Thackeray's irony is a blundering masculine thing beside her tempered weapon; she never employs the blunt commonplaces of

sarcasm. No one but a woman could have drawn the portrait of Mr. Collins in *Pride and Prejudice*, or of Mr. Elton in *Emma* —and no one but a woman of a singularly independent spirit. Miss Austen among these country clergy at Winchester was a very different woman from Miss Seward and her cathedral society at Lichfield ; we can imagine what she would have made of the Lichfield canons and Dr. Erasmus Darwin. Mr. Collins, unfortunately for his cloth, is likely to remain one of the classic parsons of literature. The portrait is most delicate. Not to believe in Mr. Collins is to do violence to common-sense ; but he is just so much out of drawing as is consistent with his disagreeable peculiarities. Miss Austen uses none of the common methods of satire ; she does not tell us to our face that he is an obsequious toady, that he is terribly ignorant and dull and thick-skinned ; she leaves these declarations to his own ingenuous self-revelation, heightening his perilous frankness by a light touch here and there. She is not altogether unjust or unkind ; she is severely impersonal. On the other hand, there is certainly no kindness in her manner. Indeed, when she sets her hand to the picture of a thoroughly disagreeable woman, she has very little mercy to show. Mr. Collins' patroness, Lady Catherine de Bourgh, is as detestable as she can well be ; the portrait of Miss de Bourgh is not without a little unnecessary cruelty ; and certainly the amount of sympathy which went to the making of Mrs. Bennet was very scanty. In all these ladies and, even more remarkably, in Mrs. Norris of *Mansfield Park*, the satire is not without its sting.

Her sympathy with her characters.

However, true humour is never without some sympathy. Miss Austen avoided obvious pathos from a well-bred dislike for sentimentality ; and when she brought her heroines, like Jane in *Pride and Prejudice* or Marianne in *Sense and Sensibility*, into sorrow, she took pains to show that they made their own misery. Nevertheless it needs no great discrimination to see that she loved them and identified herself with them, so long as they continued to communicate themselves to their readers' affections. If there is a more lovable woman in fiction than Elizabeth Bennet she is hard to find. We may find it somewhat more difficult to like Emma Woodhouse as Miss Austen would have her liked ; but, on closer acquaintance, our dislike vanishes and we begin to feel something of the authoress' partiality for the positive and censorious young lady into whom Miss Austen, we may be sure, put more than a little of herself. Her calm temperament was incapable of imagining a faultless heroine ; the more ardently she loved her idols, the more clearly she saw that their feet were only clay. In this the truth of her heroines to nature consists. It must be confessed that, since it is impossible for the most cunning novelist to be absolutely perfect, she could not draw a man—or, more correctly, her men make very bad heroes. No one will be likely to forget

Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*, but his immortality rests upon his unutterable priggishness. Edmund Bertram in *Mansfield Park*, Henry Tilney in *Northanger Abbey*, are both as full of moral lessons as Mrs. Chapone ; they are infallible guides on the question of female behaviour. If either of these young men has made a mistake in life, it is precisely in his never having been in the wrong. Vulgarly speaking, if stuffed and put in a glass case by the side of Daniel Deronda and one or two others of their species, they would cut an appropriate figure ; in life they are superfluous. Edmund and Mr. Tilney are both clergymen, but one never remembers their orders ; in any case they would be a poor *amende honorable* for Mr. Collins. Of the more fallible young men there is little to say. The false, fleeting Willoughby, the callous Wickham, the boisterous John Thorpe, are little more than satisfactory lay figures. Perhaps Miss Austen's most successful men, apart from her butts, Mr. Collins and Mr. Elton, are her fathers. Mr. Bennet is admirable, and Mr. Woodhouse's amiable idiosyncrasies are a great contribution to the gaiety of *Emma*. Sir Thomas Bertram's advent in the middle of the preparations for the private theatricals at Mansfield Park is one of the best things in the whole of these novels.

"Pride and Prejudice" (1813) ; *"Emma"* (1816).

On an individual examination of Miss Austen's work there can be very little hesitation as to the best of her novels, even where all are so good. *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma* stand out not far, but noticeably, above the rest. In *Pride and Prejudice* there is perhaps a little more variety, a little more dramatic interest. But the greater maturity of *Emma* is obvious. Miss Austen was devoted to the minutiæ of her craft, and it is hardly likely that *Pride and Prejudice* remained so long in manuscript without undergoing the file more than once. Nevertheless slight roughnesses remain. *Emma*, on the contrary, presents the smoothest surface of any English novel. The character of Emma herself is Miss Austen's intentional masterpiece ; she treated no single figure so scrupulously and so skilfully, with so manifest an attention to detail. Fine as Elizabeth is, she is merely a brilliant sketch beside this finished portrait. Further, there is a clearly marked alteration in Miss Austen's humour. The Eltons and Miss Bates are caricatured with the rarest delicacy ; it is hard to detect exactly where the exaggeration lies. In the case of Mr. Collins we could lay our finger on it at once. Compare, again, Mr. Bennet with Mr. Woodhouse ; the result is that the little hardnesses and distortions of *Pride and Prejudice* have given way to a suavity and kindliness of treatment, a certainty of touch, which renders the art of the later work an imperceptible quality permeating every sentence. After these two books, choice is difficult ; but both *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*, slight as they are in execution and far apart in date, have an air of organic perfection that neither

of the two remaining novels wears. In both books Miss Austen is at one with her heroine ; and, in her laughable adventures at General Tilney's country mansion, Catherine of *Northanger Abbey* is fully intended to appeal to our sympathy.

Last of all, there is the matter of style. We have said that Miss Austen belonged to the eighteenth century ; she was of the following of Dr. Johnson, and her style is the *beau idéal* of correctness. At the same time it has a lightness which was not included in Johnson's ideas of perspicuity. It has something of his strength and directness ; in its ease and fluency it is more distinctly reminiscent of Addison. But it has no ornament, no picturesqueness. It is not going too far to say that every sentence is scrupulously bald ; but its baldness has a well-trimmed polish. She suggests very little to the imagination ; she has her precise phrase for everything she sees ; she describes without implication ; a queen among realists, she is boldly unimaginative in her use of words. But the ultimate conclusion must be that this very simplicity of manner is among the most exquisite of her qualities. Her style looks deceptively easy to imitate : to attempt to write English as she did is the vainest of endeavours. The genius for simplicity, the power of putting the most common things to the finest uses, which is the distinctive mark of her fiction, finds its concrete symbol in her level, unemotional use of everyday English. Her phrases are memorable, not from any studied use of effect, but because they are the colloquial phrases of common life used in the right way and at the right moment, and translated in their use into the highest literary form.

Miss Austen's style.

§ 5. The Scottish novel of manners is supplied by SUSAN EDMONSTONE FERRIER, who completes the irregular trio of which Miss Austen and Miss Edgeworth represent the English and Irish genius. Her first novel, *Marriage* (1818), was published eight years after it had been written, and was followed by *The Inheritance* (1824) and *Destiny* (1831). There is a certain superficial likeness between Miss Ferrier and Miss Austen springing from their very similar faculties of observation ; but it is only skin-deep. Miss Ferrier drew some admirable sketches of society in her three books, which are surprisingly equal in merit ; she had shrewdness and sarcasm in abundance, and was not altogether merciful in her method of caricature. At the same time she leaned rather obviously to the sentimental, and freely allowed her heroines to suffer unmerited woes and disappointments with the ordinary proportion of tears and pallid resignation. Thus she is more old-fashioned than Miss Austen, or even than most of the eighteenth-century novelists ; and her books, although known to the student, are somewhat unjustly forgotten by most readers. It is interesting to notice that she was one of those writers whose fiction claimed Scott's generous

SUSAN FERRIER (1782–1854).

admiration. Her father was a Writer to the Signet, and she was well known in Edinburgh society. Her comparative position in the literature of her day is that of a Smollett to Miss Austen's Fielding; but this is a very general analogy, and is applicable chiefly on the ground of her stronger and coarser satire.

Another Scottish novelist of some eminence is JOHN GALT of Irvine, in Ayrshire, who for the first part of his life was in a merchant's office at Greenock, and, during his later years, became a journalist and writer of many kinds, attempting poems, plays, and historical novels. In 1809 he went to the south of Europe, and sailed with Byron from Gibraltar to Malta. He went out to Canada in 1826, to promote a colonisation scheme; but lost most of his money, returned to Scotland, and lived precariously on the earnings of his pen until his death, which took place at Greenock. His important work begins with *The Ayrshire Legatees* (1820), which came out in *Blackwood* and was succeeded by *The Annals of the Parish* (1821), *Sir Andrew Wylie* and *The Provost* (1822), *The Entail* (1823), and *The Omen* (1825). These are principally very truthful and realistic sketches of that Ayrshire life amid which Galt had grown up, and are all excellent of their kind. Galt was, generally speaking, an imitator of Scott, and belongs to the *Blackwood* school of novelists, of which Wilson and Lockhart (to be mentioned in another chapter) were also members; and it may be said that, while in his other fiction he was considerably below his great master, he was at least his equal in these vivid narratives of common life. A microscopic sense of detail, an abundantly quaint and sometimes very pathetic humour, and a wonderful accuracy of draughtsmanship, give these books the effect of a Dutch painting.

JOHN GALT (1779–1839).

§ 6. Miss Austen found an admirer and imitator in another Hampshire lady, MARY RUSSELL MITFORD, born at Alresford, where her father was a doctor. Unfortunately he was also a gambler, and so squandered his family's money that his daughter's writings became the sole mainstay of the household. For fifty-six years of her life this father was her constant burden; but she obtained, after his death, a pension from Government and suffered no extreme of poverty. She wrote plentifully, beginning with poetry and plays, and bringing out, at the very last, one regular novel, *Atherton* (1854). But she is essentially a woman of one book. *Our Village* began to appear (1819) in *The Lady's Magazine* and afterwards came out rather slowly in parts (1824–32). It is not strictly a novel nor even fiction, but a collection of descriptive scenes drawn from the life of the little hamlet of Three Mile Cross, near Reading, where the Mitfords lived for several years. The hand is the hand of Crabbe, but the voice is that of Miss Austen. Miss Mitford, it is true, had more outward tender-

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD (1787–1855).

ness for her fellow-creatures than her self-controlled model, and there is nothing in her humour that can be called cynical. However, she has Miss Austen's placidity of manner and something of her thoroughness of observation; and, whatever she owed to Crabbe, she borrowed nothing of his ruggedness or gloominess. Her style is not faultless, but it would be hard to find a style so pleasantly conversational and so intimately connected with the writer's self. *Our Village* remains one of those unique and charming books which are a perfect revelation of the interest of everyday life when seen by a thoroughly sympathetic observer. Miss Mitford painted the humours of Reading in another book, *Belford Regis* (1835), of which she had a high opinion; posterity, however, has agreed that a masterpiece like *Our Village* cannot be repeated. Two years before Miss Mitford's death appeared the only worthy companion to her book, Mrs. Gaskell's *Cranford*.

Since we are in the society of so many ladies, this seems the proper place to say something of that very extraordinary woman HARRIET MARTINEAU, who stands among the novelists by virtue of *Deerbrook* (1839). Miss Martineau needs special study and special sympathy if we are to do justice to her slightly erratic genius. In the regular course of literary history, however, she has no recognised place. She was a searcher after truth, and, in later life, developed propagandist activities; and, like most people who have written with a very decided purpose, she lost sight of her art. She was brought up in the cultured atmosphere of Norwich, where William Taylor, the apostle of German literature in England, was the leader of a society of *literati*. Here she learned an enthusiasm for philanthropy which never left her; her religious opinions, on the other hand, went through a marked transformation from strict Unitarianism to a diluted kind of Positivism which she embraced with an aggressive fervour. She translated and adapted Comte in 1853, and did a fair amount of journalistic work. Her first essay in fiction was her *Illustrations of Political Economy* (1832–4), in which she enlivened that mysterious science for children, something after the manner of Miss Edgeworth in her utilitarian fiction. She continued to write for the young, and, in *Feats on the Fiord* (1841), produced a good Norwegian tale, not unknown to children of the present day. Among her other books may be mentioned *The Hour and the Man* (1841), which is an historical romance; her sketches of travel, in two books, about America (1837–8), and *Eastern Life, Past and Present* (1848); and her *Biographical Sketches* (1869). The end of her life was spent at a pretty house near Ambleside.

HARRIET MARTINEAU (1802–1876).

§ 7. Miss Martineau's philanthropy and heterodoxy take us back to an antiquated school of novelists who combined their fiction with a certain amount of philosophy. WILLIAM GODWIN, the father-in-law of Shelley, was a very exceptional person. He was born at

WILLIAM GODWIN (1756–1836).

Wisbech, and was educated for the Presbyterian ministry. When he was twenty-seven his religious convictions left him, he gave up his charge, and became a political journalist. In 1793 he published an *Enquiry concerning Political Justice*, which made him the idol of some of the young enthusiasts already suffering from the mental disturbance caused by the French Revolution. Both Wordsworth and Coleridge came temporarily under his influence. Shelley, as we know, was his political disciple. In public Godwin was a disinterested philosopher who preached anarchy because he saw in it a remedy for existing ills. His private life, on the other hand, was rather mean and selfish. He was perpetually living on the generosity of Shelley, and seems to have had very little sense of honour. If this can be overlooked in the case of a poet and dreamer like Coleridge, it must be taken into account with a professional philosopher whose head, as we say, is "the right way on." Godwin was neither a foolish nor unpractical person. However, while his theories had some originality, they were in the main a compound of opinions from other philosophers; and his real claim to notice depends on his remarkable novel *Caleb Williams* (1794). Godwin wrote this book with a purpose—to show the misery and injustice arising from an imperfect constitution of society and the oppression of imperfect laws both written and unwritten. Caleb Williams is an intelligent young peasant who is taken into the service of Falkland, an incarnation of honour, intellect, kindness of heart, and self-respect. Unfortunately, under the provocation of a cruel insult, this paragon has committed a murder which his fanatic love of reputation urges him to conceal. He allows an innocent man to be executed and his family ruined. Williams accidentally obtains a clue to his master's guilt and receives from him, under an oath of secrecy, the story of the whole crime. He naturally becomes an object of suspicion to Falkland, who is so frantically jealous of his own fame that he seeks to annihilate, in Williams, the evidence of his double guilt. Williams escapes from his service, but is hounded down by his pursuer and formally accused of robbery. He retaliates by making his master's shameful secret public; and Falkland dies of shame and a broken heart. The point of this story, its attack on law and public opinion, is at once evident. It is told, moreover, in a way that commands our attention. Godwin had not a little of Defoe's well-nigh miraculous simplicity. His description of Williams' escape from Falkland is a wonderful piece of realistic writing, full of excitement and suspense. On the other hand, he had not Defoe's picturesque imagination, his power of converting fiction into historical veracity. *Caleb Williams* is a story of things as they would be under given circumstances, not of things as they must have been. The whole machinery of the tale is too evident; it is a splendid experiment in the literature of cause and effect. The

"Caleb Williams" (1794).

writer has an entire faith in his work, but he never conceals the fact that he has to think it all out first, to construct an elaborate system of cranks and pulleys on which it must revolve. He had no humour, no eye for natural beauty, nothing that could be really and truly called pathos; but his glimpse into the metaphysical aspect of human nature, into the mysteries of the will and passions, made a masterpiece out of a book which has some startling deficiencies. *Caleb Williams* was followed by *St. Leon* (1799), a story dealing with the elixir of life and containing the beautiful character of Marguerite, whom Godwin drew, it is said, from his second wife, Mary Wollstonecraft. This, in its turn, was succeeded by *Fleetwood* (1805), *Mandeville* (1817), and *Cloudesley* (1830), in which Godwin utterly exhausted his vein of fiction. Among his other works were *The Enquirer* (1797), a series of didactic essays, a *Life of Chaucer* (1803), and an unsuccessful tragedy called *Antonio* (1800). He also answered (1820) Malthus' famous *Essay on Population*, wrote a *History of the Commonwealth* (1824–8), and numerous pamphlets advocating social revolution.

A much less interesting exponent of sociology in fiction was ROBERT BAGE of Derby and Elford, near Tamworth, the author of *Hermsprong, or Man as he is not* (1796), and five other novels, three of which — *Mount Henneth* (1781), *Barham Downs* (1784), and *James Wallace* (1788)—were afterwards published by Sir Walter Scott in Ballantyne's "Novelists' Library." Bage was nominally a Quaker and actually a firebrand of Godwin's type, full of revolutionary visions and projects which involved the overthrow of existing order. His novels, however, have very little claim to immortality; they are a clever following of eighteenth-century models and little more. Bage's life ended with the beginning of the new century, when he was already advanced in years; he therefore stands almost alone as an example of the juvenile spirit of the new era in a man whose early life and manhood had been passed under the old *régime*. ROBERT BAGE (1728–1801).

THOMAS HOLCROFT, a member of the same school, although many years younger that Bage, was also considerably older than Godwin, on whom his novels had some influence. While Bage was a respectable paper-maker all his life, Holcroft was a jack-of-all-trades and went through various experiences, from a stable at Newmarket to the stage. His *Road to Ruin* (1792) was a very successful play, and his novels, *Alwyn, or the Gentleman Comedian* (1780), *Anna St. Ives* (1792), and *Hugh Trevor* (1794–7), were also profitable. His politics, however, brought him into trouble, and he was tried with Horne Tooke, Thomas Hardy, and nine others, for high treason in 1794. Five years later he went on the Continent and started an unprofitable business as a connoisseur of art, a branch of knowledge in which he had no practical experience. *Anna St. Ives* is written in letters, and, although THOMAS HOLCROFT (1745–1809).

its length—it appeared in seven volumes—is perhaps greater than its literary value, it should be read in illustration of Godwin's books. *Alwyn* and *Hugh Trevor* have something of a personal interest, and connect themselves with Holcroft's autobiography, published after his death (1816) and partially written by Hazlitt.

§ 8. A novelist whose work has little in common with that of these eccentric democrats, and yet has a certain bearing upon the social and political side of his age, is found in THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK, the friend of Shelley. He was born at Weymouth and died, at a ripe old age, as late as 1866; his work, however, with the exception of *Gryll Grange* (1861), is entirely pre-Victorian. He was the son of a London glass-merchant, and never went to a university; yet, while still young, he had read deeply, and with discrimination, in the Greek and Latin classics and in French and Italian literature, and thus formed a distinct style, which has given him a place of his own in English letters. His early poetry, *Palmyra* (1806) and *The Genius of the Thames* (1810), failed to attract public notice. These poems were, however, of service to him. He was no mean poet, as his later books proved; and Shelley, seeing in him something above the common, became his friend and added a chapter, not merely to Peacock's biography, but to his own. This friendship began in 1812 and was continued by personal intercourse and correspondence until Shelley's death. At this time Peacock lived in North Wales and found there much of the local colour for his best work. In 1816 he published his first novel, *Headlong Hall*, a somewhat whimsical story, set amid Welsh scenery and well stocked with genial satire. It was followed by *Melincourt* (1817) and *Nightmare Abbey* (1818), novels of the same class, which showed an increasing improvement. The classical poem, *Rhododaphne* (1818), received a friend's review from Shelley, and is certainly the best of Peacock's longer pieces in verse. From 1819 till 1855 he held a valuable clerkship in the India House. His new responsibilities did not hinder him from publishing. *Maid Marian* (1822), *The Misfortunes of Elphin* (1829), and *Crotchet Castle* (1831)—the last his undoubted masterpiece—appeared during the earlier years of his service with the Company. As his duties increased he became silent. After many years he produced a few magazine articles, and in 1860 his last novel, *Gryll Grange*, which showed very little falling-off, appeared as a serial in *Fraser's Magazine*.

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK (1785–1866).

Peacock is a singular rather than a great writer; yet his oddities are those which please the critical palate most. He could neither make a plot, create a character, nor give life to those already created for him. Like Jonson—there is much in his work that is truly Elizabethan—he observed "humours" rather than individuals. The reader who enjoys the "humours" of *The*

Humour of Peacock's work.

Alchemist or *Bartholomew Fair* will thoroughly appreciate the faddists who gather round Mr. Crotchet's table in *Crotchet Castle*—Mr. Chainmail the medievalist, Mr. Philpot the water-lover, Mr. Skionar the transcendentalist, and Dr. Folliott the scholar. Peacock kept his eyes open for every craze and fashion of his time; he was interested in people, not because they were human beings, but because they had peculiarities; and he was quite unable to settle on anything other than their whims and fancies. The element of caricature is thus the strongest constituent in his work, but his extravagance is eminently refined and cultured and appeals in the first place to educated readers. His humour, too, is entirely his own, unlike anything before or since; and thus his work has a native quality which is exquisite because it is unique. In his close observation of the outer man he did not forget his contemporaries, and his books contain very amusing caricatures of Shelley, Coleridge, and Byron; while his level-headed distrust of enthusiasms led him to make merciless fun of Lord Brougham and his Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. As for Peacock's style, to say that it is beautiful hardly conveys its real value. It is the ideal fabric of narrative, a simple texture shot with all colours in the quaintest combination. Everywhere this strange, radiant style—not merely good and serviceable, but the transparent veil through which we see Peacock's own "humour"—is sprinkled with little lyrics, war-songs, love-songs, drinking-songs—the work of a real, if at times an eccentric poet. If, in our estimate of Peacock's poetry, we place him, side by side with Beddoes, among the first of our minor poets, we shall not be far wrong.

§ 9. Military and naval stories—especially naval—demand some attention from the student; and, during the first half of the nineteenth century, one or two novelists out of the many who ventured on such subjects, did first-rate work. FREDERICK MARRYAT, a naval captain who had served under Lord Cochrane and in Burma, retired from the service to write a series of rattling sea-stories. He was a man of high animal spirits, and wrote with an almost superfluous sense of the grotesque. His model was, of course, Smollett. No one could sit down to write an unvarnished tale of the sea without remembering *Roderick Random* or the humours of Commodore Trunnion and Pipes in *Peregrine Pickle*. If he was not so savage and coarse as Smollett, he had very little refinement and less style. His sentences came straight off his pen without preparation; he spun his narrative as he went along, and did not stop to think. Nevertheless, his books, reaching no high literary standard, have delighted many readers, and young people will probably continue to admire their extravagant fun for an indefinite period. Marryat, although perpetually and obviously endeavouring to raise a laugh, had a method in his madness, and played the mountebank with a

Captain Marryat (1792–1848).

judgment that carried off his audacity. He, too, dealt prodigiously in "humours." His three best novels, *Peter Simple*, (1834), *Jacob Faithful* (1834), and *Mr. Midshipman Easy* (1836), furnish us with a complete gallery of odd and original portraits of this kind which compensate for the inarticulate and improbable course of the story. Smollett might well have owned to Captain Kearney, with his lies and innocent ostentation; Captain To, with his passion for pig, his lean wife, and his piano; or Mr. Easy, fighting his ship under a green petticoat for want of an ensign. It should certainly be remarked that, if Marryat's view of character was superficial, he had a very extensive knowledge of the outside of what his old waterman calls "human natur'"; while, without being a great humorist, he had some command of pathos.

CHARLES LEVER (1806–1872).

CHARLES JAMES LEVER, an Irishman, who was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, practised as a physician at Brussels and other places, and died at Trieste, wrote military novels bearing a close resemblance to Marryat's sea-stories. Most people have read *Harry Lorrequer* (1837) and *Charles O'Malley* (1840), and have enjoyed Lever's extraordinary farrago of genial nonsense and military history. These novels are still in Smollett's manner, but their humour has an Irish flavour which gives it more urbanity than can be ascribed to Marryat's grotesque sketches. Lever wrote a great deal, and his later period is distinguished by an entire change of manner. In books like *Roland Cashel* (1850) or *The Daltons* (1852), he went for his subject to ordinary life, and produced work which, according to his professed admirers, is far superior to his earlier attempts. Lever's vein of humour was rather thin, and, in some of his books—*Arthur O'Leary* (1844), for instance—is palpably tedious; still, of those healthy novelists who have written good stories of adventure without paying too much attention to their literary manner, Lever is perhaps the best.

MICHAEL SCOTT (1789–1835).

Scotland adds her novelist to this section in the person of MICHAEL SCOTT, a West Indian merchant born at Cowlairs, a suburb of Glasgow. *Tom Cringle's Log* (1836) and *The Cruise of the Midge* (1836) were both written for *Blackwood* and published posthumously. In imagination, humour, and power of luxuriant description, Scott showed himself to be a worthy namesake of the medieval wizard. Rather less is known about him even than about that obscure worthy. His tales appeared anonymously in their serial form, and were ascribed to Professor Wilson. In comparing Michael Scott with Marryat or Lever, he will be found the most careful novelist of the three, true to the life which he sets out to depict, in some senses a greater humorist, in any case a more fastidious critic of his own style.

§ 10. We resume the regular thread of the novel with SIR EDWARD GEORGE EARLE LYTTON-BULWER—there is no need to go into the various changes of his name—known to-day as

the first Lord Lytton. His father was General Bulwer, his mother was a Miss Lytton of Knebworth, in Hertfordshire, and, on inheriting her property, he took her name. His genius showed itself early. At seventeen he published a book of poems called *Ismael*, and, later on, when he went up to Cambridge—he was at Trinity—he won the Chancellor's Medal for a poem on *Sculpture* (1825). Two years later, after the publication of a novel, *Falkland* (1827), he distinguished himself by *Pelham* (1828), which soon became the fashionable novel of the day. In 1831 he was elected to represent St. Ives in Parliament. When the Reform Bill deprived him of his borough, he sat for Lincoln till 1841. In 1835 he was made a baronet, having won by that time unusual literary fame. From 1842 to 1852 he retired from public life and spent his time in writing novels, plays, and poems. In 1852 he returned to the House of Commons as member for Hertfordshire, became Colonial Secretary in Lord Derby's Cabinet of 1858, received a peerage in 1866, and died at Torquay in 1873.

LORD LYTTON (1803-1873).

Bulwer's life was simply an unqualified success; in whatever he attempted he made his mark. He wrote remarkable novels, good plays, fair poems. His place in the Cabinet was gained by his capacity for debate. At the same time, while everything he did was facile and never exactly ungraceful, he did nothing that was first-rate; and he is likely to remain, where criticism is concerned, a mournful example of the dangers of versatility. His *début* was frankly Byronic. In *Pelham* he proclaimed himself the prince of dandy novelists, an exquisite with fine sensibilities and artificial passions, wearing the orchid of a worldly life. This pose was condemned and satirised by Carlyle in *Sartor Resartus*, not without justice. But Bulwer by no means kept to the dandyism of his early days. *Eugene Aram* (1832) is an entirely different kind of book, and has a strong power of fascination, notwithstanding the fact that to sentimentalise over crime is a dangerous abuse of literary art. Again, in the series of novels in which the chief landmarks are *The Last Days of Pompeii* (1834), *Rienzi* (1835), *The Last of the Barons* (1843), and *Harold* (1848), we see Bulwer turning to the historical romance and writing with some *éclat*. *The Caxtons* (1850), *My Novel* (1853), and *What will He Do with it?* (1858), form an altogether new series dealing with domestic life. However, in *The Last of the Barons*, Bulwer never rises to the level of Scott; and, excellent as *The Caxtons* is, it is a long way removed from Miss Austen. His final novels, *A Strange Story* (1862), *The Coming Race* (1871), *The Parisians* (1873), and *Kenelm Chillingly* (1873), are, in their turn, representatives of various types.

Classification of his novels.

Bulwer's main fault is, without doubt, his ponderousness. Many of his novels are inimitably dreary; there are few which we do not dismiss with thankfulness. He had humour—a

precise, old-fashioned drollery which is at its best in the Caxton novels; in his historical novels it almost vanishes. As befitted a student in the school of Byron, he was a sentimentalist; more than all this, he had a fatal inclination to abstruse forms of philosophy, which over-weighted his prose and filled his novels with irrelevant digressions. Transcendentalists, magicians, medieval schoolmen, were part of his regular stock-in-trade. Naturally, he admired grandiloquence and periphrasis in all their forms, and was the master of a style which, even to the end, was a marvel of polysyllables. It is impossible to forget his merits, and equally impossible to overlook the faults which, in less than twenty years after his death, lost him his place among English novelists. Thackeray's shrewd wit saw through his shortcomings. No more just attack on his sentimentalism and his faults of style can be found than *George de Barnwell*, the immortal parody on *Eugene Aram*. When Charles Jeames Yellowplush, in his *Epistles to the Literati*, apostrophised his "dear Barnit"—"A rose by any other name would smell as sweet. Confess now . . . wouldn't you like to call it a polyanthus?"—he hit off the great peculiarity of Bulwer's manner. It goes without saying that the tendency to call a rose a polyanthus is fatal to a reputation.

His faults.

As a dramatist, Bulwer has a more than passing distinction. *The Sea Captain* (1837), which was the object of Yellowplush's gentle satire, was an inferior production, it is true; but *Richelieu* (1838), *The Lady of Lyons* (1838), and *Money* (1840), are among the best plays of a not very fertile century, and are still produced from time to time. His poems—of which one, *King Arthur* (1848–9), is an epic—never gained the reputation which their author thought they deserved; but an early poem, *Milton* (1831), and a Parliamentary sketch of some vigour, *St. Stephens* (1860), have received a fair share of admiration. He was, moreover, a biting satirist, and his *New Timon* (1845–7), had a sharp sting in it for some of his contemporaries. But his intellect ripened and grew more mellow with his years. If he did not obtain a place among the greatest writers, he had no dotage, no period of late and feeble work. Up to the end he wrote with the same ease and the same distinction—a distinction oppressive, it is true, but none the less real.

Lytton as a dramatist.

§ 11. The same combination of novelist and statesman is found, in a more brilliant form, in BENJAMIN DISRAELI, first EARL OF BEACONSFIELD. This illustrious man was the son of Isaac Disraeli, the author of the *Curiosities of Literature*, and had made a considerable name in prose fiction before he entered Parliament. While his political greatness was still ripening he gave conclusive, if not so abundant, proofs of his powers in the same field; and, long after he had become the leader of a great party and Prime

BENJAMIN DISRAELI (1804–1881).

Minister of England, returned to it with unabated zest and surpassing success. And his genius for this manner of writing and its peculiar qualities is so unmistakably present in his novels that his preference of politics to literature is still resentfully deplored by admiring critics, who see in him a great literary artist thrown away on the service of the Empire. His earliest book, *Vivian Grey* (1826–7), is a very striking, if crude, attempt to sketch the notable men of his time, and to give utterance to singularly original and daring ideas on politics. It had more than a year's start of *Pelham*, and, like it, is a "dandy" novel, less mature but less Byronic, and showing promise of a very unusual humour amid its extravagances. *The Young Duke* (1831) is a more mature effort "to portray the fleeting manners of a frivolous age"; yet it betrays its author's fascinated interest in the movement of public life. *Contarini Fleming* (1832) was published anonymously and missed its mark for the moment, being, in its author's words, "almost stillborn"; but after a time it made its way, although slowly, and gained the approval of more than one man of genius at home and abroad. His next publication, *The Wondrous Tale of Alroy* (1833), an historical and oriental novel, revealed for the first time the tender and passionate interest of the young novelist in the history, spirit, and ideas of the race from which he was sprung. The very year, 1837, in which he entered political life he produced two novels, *Henrietta Temple* and *Venetia*, which have nothing at all to do with politics. The first is what it calls itself, "a love story"—and a very sentimental one into the bargain—and into the second are worked the personalities of Byron and Shelley, whose destinies are blended in its action with some ingenuity but doubtful felicity.

Disraeli had been seven years in Parliament before his first really impressive book, *Coningsby* (1844), was published. In this powerful novel the author delivered his soul on "the origin and condition of political parties" with such scorching irony, humour, sarcasm, keenness of temper, and flashing wit, that it has settled into the position of a kind of classic; its Rigby, Taper, and Tadpole, are still familiar as typical figures in the public life of the day. It was followed by the second and third portions of the great trilogy—as Disraeli named the group—*Sybil* (1845) and *Tancred, or the New Crusade* (1847). These three books developed the rising politician's original and somewhat fantastic views, and in *Tancred* he gave dark utterances and hints regarding certain doctrines of national regeneration that had been revealed to the Hebrew race alone. This "Asian mystery" mystified the public, and was cruelly bantered by the professed wits. Thackeray, in *Codlingsby*, parodied Disraeli as successfully as, in *George de Barnwell*, he parodied Bulwer.

"Coningsby" (1844) and its successors.

Twenty-three years later, when the man of letters was believed to be irrecoverably lost in the statesman, Disraeli, then Prime

Minister, startled the world with *Lothair* (1870), of which he boasts that it "has been more extensively read . . . than any work that has appeared for the last half century." The freshness of spirit and thronging life of its pages, in which many of the distinguished personages of the hour are made to play their parts under their disguises, explain to some extent its amazing popularity. Here, as before, Disraeli wrote with a purpose, intending to put young men of rank and wealth on their guard against the perils and pitfalls of the time—not as a tedious moralist, but as a consummate man of the world. Eleven years after came the last novel, *Endymion* (1880), a book of like character with *Lothair*, and making up by its absorbing personal interest—for its hero is a reminiscence of the author's own personality—for what it may lack of its predecessor's sparkling qualities. Besides these and satiric fancies like *Ixion* and *Popanilla* (both 1828), Disraeli wrote in 1834 a fragment of an ambitious *Revolutionary Epic*, a tragedy called *Count Alarcos* (1839), the *Life of Lord George Bentinck* (1852), and some minor pieces of fiction. His style is a somewhat puzzling, occasionally distracting, mixture of seriousness and jest, of grave and gay; stinging satire and solemn sneer alternate with a sincere earnestness of tone. Throughout he shows a distinct preference—which amounts to remarkably bad taste—for what is splendid, dazzling, and gorgeous; and he is only too often rhetorical and pompous. But the mark of genius is on all his work.

"Lothair" (1870) and later work.

§ 12. It is probable that, when the Victorian era is become a matter of history, Dickens and Thackeray, in spite of other claims, will still be reckoned its greatest novelists. CHARLES DICKENS, a little the younger of the two, sprang into fame at a very early age. He was the son of a Government clerk whose life was a continuous struggle with poverty and debt, and, in his early boyhood, was obliged to drudge for some years in a blacking manufactory, suffering considerable discomfort, but gaining an intimate acquaintance with the lowest forms of city life that served him in good stead. He was afterwards office-boy to an attorney, then a reporter in Doctors' Commons, then a reporter in Parliament, winning his way to comparative competence by steady industry. His first effort in literature was a series of sketches, descriptive and narrative, which appeared in various periodicals, and were published as *Sketches by Boz* (1836). These soon reached a second edition; and, in the same year, he began the *Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* (1837), to supply a humorous commentary on a series of sporting caricatures. However, they soon eclipsed the drawings which they accompanied. As each number came out, the fame of their author increased. Everybody read the *Pickwick Papers*. The sayings of Sam Weller became

CHARLES DICKENS (1812–1870).

proverbial, and the sale of the monthly numbers rose to thirty thousand copies.

The *Pickwick Papers* showed that their author was a great humorist, and defined the character of his humour. It may be said that in Dickens' writing there are two distinct elements. First, there is a sense of the grotesque; secondly, there is a sense of the pathetic; and both are abnormal. The grotesque side of his work must always excite admiring laughter; the pathetic side, on the other hand, has an uncanny grotesqueness of its own which hardly moves to tears, and has at once an attractive and repellent effect. Even in *Pickwick*, a masterpiece of almost unalloyed cheerfulness, the intrusion of a narrative like the Madman's story gives us a foretaste of that grim melodrama in which he indulged extravagantly at a later period. *Pickwick*, however, differing as it does from the rest of his novels, is the best representative of his method. Dickens, in developing the original bent of his genius, followed Smollett; and, to the end of his life, he was an observer of "humours" rather than of character. Each personage in the book is known by the ticket which he wears; each has, so to speak, his peculiar monomania whose stamp clings ineffaceably to him. The notorious Mr. Alfred Jingle is known by his telegraphic method of lying; Sam Weller by his gnomic manner of speech; the Fat Boy by his fatness; the Pickwickians by their various eccentricities; Mr. Benjamin Allen by his philanthropic love of blood-letting. Indulgence in this method may imply a slight monotony—and Dickens is frequently blamed on this ground by the more fastidious—but the fact is that he was capable of ringing infinite changes on these first principles of character. We have a general idea as to how each of these characters will behave on a given occasion, but we cannot foresee exactly what he is going to do or say; and, as he always does or says something unexpected, our interest is constantly stimulated. Nor are they by any means lay figures. Dickens had an almost unrivalled knowledge of the externals of human nature, and the people in *Pickwick*, although consistently improbable, are never unnatural. Moreover, his caricature, unless it was directed against anything which he righteously hated, was always genial and good-humoured. Mr. Pickwick himself is ridiculous enough, but it is impossible to laugh at him without regarding him, as did the young ladies at Mr. Wardle's, as a "dear old thing"; and, even in the ruthless picture of Mr. Stiggins' hypocrisy and the orgies of the Grand Junction Temperance Society, the sting is assuaged by the presence of a good temper delighted with its outrageous surroundings. As a long extravaganza following the lines of no particular plot —for the difficulties of Mr. Pickwick with Mrs. Bardell are merely a central episode—and as a gallery of brilliant burlesque portraits, *Pickwick* has certainly no equal.

"Pickwick" (1837-8): its typical features.

Oliver Twist (1838) was Dickens' next book—a very realistic study of the lives of thieves and rascals, leaning towards the sombre side of life as much as *Pickwick* had leaned towards its gayer features. *Oliver Twist* was the beginning of a long series of attacks on existing abuses. In the workhouse scenes we see the earliest evidence of that purpose with which Dickens wrote—a purpose which, damaging as it may have been to his art, was certainly effective, and gives him a place among the social reformers of the Victorian era. Simultaneously, in Rose Maylie and the more genteel characters, there are signs of the artificial pathos which, in *Dombey and Son*, became unendurable. In the episode of Bill Sikes, however, Dickens achieved a masterpiece of melodramatic horror which, although he exceeded it afterwards in manner, he never surpassed in quality. To estimate it properly it is necessary to compare it with passages like the suicide of Ralph Nickleby in his next novel, *Nicholas Nickleby* (1839). The main purpose of this book was an *exposé* of the notorious "Yorkshire schools"; and the picture of Wackford Squeers' establishment, terrible as it is, is certainly among Dickens' finest pieces of humorous writing. Otherwise, *Nicholas Nickleby*, like *Pickwick*, is a collection of oddities depending on no coherency of plot but on their several peculiarities. *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1840) and *Barnaby Rudge* (1841) were issued, like some of Scott's novels, under a general title, *Master Humphrey's Clock*—which was dropped after their publication. In both the presence of a more artistic effort is to be discerned. *Barnaby Rudge*, wholly excellent, is in part a narrative of the "No Popery" riots of 1780. *The Old Curiosity Shop* contains much humour, but its atmosphere is overladen with pity and terror; and even the episode of Dick Swiveller and the Marchioness has a circumstantial squalor which makes it not wholly amusing. In Quilp and the Brass household there is an excess of the horrible and mysterious form of humour to which we have already seen Dickens inclining. Their personalities hang like a shadow over the book, and even their outward accidents—Quilp's summer-house or Sally Brass' head-dress—contribute powerfully to their general repulsiveness. The stroke of imagination by which Dickens, at the end of the book, pictured the eventual fate of the Brasses, is certainly one of the most disagreeable things in the English novel, while, in its vivid intensity, it is worthy of Balzac. The real, if somewhat sinister, excellence of *The Old Curiosity Shop* is very much obscured by the intolerable and popular sentimentalism which Dickens manifested in the character and death of Little Nell. Nevertheless, her wanderings with her grandfather lead to our acquaintance with such delightful people as Codlin and Short and Mrs. Jarley; and their flight through the smoky manufacturing country is a splendid example of Dickens' power as an

Growth of the double element in Dickens' work (1838–1841).

"The Old Curiosity Shop" (1840).

artist. Nowhere else, unless in his own *Hard Times*, is the picturesque impression which springs from the very ugliness of a manufacturing centre better conveyed to the reader—an impression thoroughly characteristic of the more serious side of his art. Unconscious of the fact as her admirers seem to be, the real value of Little Nell's portrait lies, not in the circumstance that it happens to be a portrait, but in the contrast between the figure and its lurid background.

Dickens had thus achieved five masterpieces in his peculiar style before he was thirty. In 1842 he went to America in search of new material, and was welcomed with a burst of applause; the whole nation strove its best to do him honour. Yet, in the *American Notes* (1842) and *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1844), he drew a picture of transatlantic society which wounded American feeling and laid him open to a charge of ingratitude. He defended himself on the ground that he had not spared his fellow-countrymen, and could hardly be expected to sacrifice truth to tenderness in sparing the absurdities of foreigners. The quarrel no longer exists, and it is possible for both nations to recognise in *Martin Chuzzlewit* Dickens' first humorous masterpiece since *Pickwick*. While the sensational element appears once more in the crime of Jonas Chuzzlewit, the treatment is unmixed with unnecessary horror and sentimentality; and, in Pecksniff and Mrs. Gamp—a satire on the monthly nurse of the period—we have two figures which are as good as anything in the previous novels. It is impossible not to trace a decline in Dickens' art after *Martin Chuzzlewit*. The fruits of two long visits to the Continent, between 1845 and 1847, were *A Christmas Carol* and its companion stories (1844–8) the *Pictures from Italy* (1846) and *Dombey and Son* (1848). In this last novel Captain Cuttle, Susan Nipper, and Mrs. Pipchin, throw a little cheerfulness over a tale of unmitigated misery. Dickens' method of treating deathbeds is at its worst in the case of little Paul, and the whole story of Edith and Mr. Carker is sheer melodrama, relieved, it is true, by a great deal of strong and picturesque writing, but on the whole morbid and unpleasant. The satire on fashionable society and *mariages de convenance* might have been more effective had Dickens known anything of what he was writing about; as it is, Mrs. Skewton and Major Bagstock are ludicrous and not altogether amusing —disagreeable gurgoyles of fiction. In such cases we have only to compare Dickens with Balzac. Both novelists suffered from chronic attacks of bad taste, and from an imagination which frequently parted company with reality and probability; but Balzac, in his society of abandoned duchesses and notorious adventurers, touched a note which Dickens never reached. In *Le Père Goriot* and *La Cousine Bette* we are under an illusion of reality; we believe in a world which we know to have been created by Balzac and no one else. *Dombey and Son* is

"Martin Chuzzlewit" (1843).

"Dombey and Son" (1848).

altogether unlikely, and the fascination of the book, such as it is, never clouds our judgment.

David Copperfield (1850) was Dickens' favourite out of all his novels. It was in a measure autobiographical. The unthrifty Micawber was a recollection of his own father, and the book contained many reminiscences of his early life. With most of his readers, too, the book appeals to the imagination more strongly than any of its predecessors. The humorous side of his genius was again subordinated to the pathetic: there can be no doubt that the story is sad. However, there is but one false note in all its pathos, and that is the figure of Rosa Dartle, which is simply another concession to horror. Even the death of Dora—whose inanity may be well contrasted with the character of Lucy in Mr. Meredith's *Richard Feverel*—is touched by a sorrow more masculine than the tearful lamentation with which little Nell and Paul Dombey were dismissed; while the story of Steerforth, if melodramatic, is intensely tragic. The conclusion of the tale is the clear shining after rain—the single instance in which Dickens brought about such an effect naturally. On the more comic side of *David Copperfield* stands Mr. Micawber, in whom Dickens discovered, as he rarely did, the real receipt for mixing the grotesque with the pathetic, and so created a really lovable, if not respectable, character. Of Uriah Heep it can only be said that he is a worthy addition to the company of Pecksniff, Squeers, and Jingle.

"David Copperfield" (1850).

This, however, was perilously within the period of decline; and *Bleak House* (1853) returned to the sensationalism of *Dombey and Son*. The most rambling and disconnected of his books, it contained many admirable things, and, in the Bagnets and a multitude of other people, it enriched his gallery of oddities. Nevertheless, it is crowded with a multitude of indiscriminate horrors—the whole Dedlock story, with the incredible Hortense, an exaggerated Rosa Dartle; the murder of Mr. Tulkinghorn; the spontaneous combustion of Mr. Krook, and the miserable delusions of Richard. Sentimentalism is represented by Jo the crossing-sweeper—not by any means unworthily. As a satire on Chancery proceedings—the hinge on which the story turns is the case of Jarndyce *v.* Jarndyce—it certainly makes an impression, Conversation Kenge, Mr. Guppy, and Miss Flite, play a striking part among the agents and victims of legal depredation. The whole book is perhaps the best example of Dickens at his best and worst, redeeming flimsy melodrama by vigorous writing, and spoiling first-rate comedy by an involuntary mawkishness of tone. Simply as a realist he never surpassed the horrible description of the churchyard in the slum, which has so prominent a situation in the plot. Nor in *Hard Times* (1854), written for his magazine, *All the Year Round*, do we fail to catch this realistic note, which we have already noticed in

The later novels (1853–1870).

Oliver Twist and *The Old Curiosity Shop*; while the opening of *Little Dorrit* (1857), with its splendid description of Marseilles in hot weather, similarly appeals to all our senses, making us see and hear and smell and touch and taste all at the same time. *Hard Times* is a powerful and tragic story dealing with social problems. *Little Dorrit* is another long rambling book like *Bleak House*, containing a not dissimilar satire in the person of Mr. Tite Barnacle and the Circumlocution Company. Mr. F.'s aunt and Mrs. General, the celebrated advocate of "papa, prunes, and prism," are not easily forgotten; nor Mr. Flintwinch, whose addresses to his wife are almost as ferocious as Quilp's connubial amenities; but the book also includes an abundance of sensational mystery, and the villainous Rigaud is a worthy fellow-countryman of Hortense in that imaginary land of fierce passions which Dickens supposed to be France. However, in *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859), he wrote a strong dramatic novel of the French Revolution, full of vivid realism and profound tragedy. This and its successor, *Great Expectations* (1861) —*The Uncommercial Traveller* (1860), a series of sketches, came between—both appeared in *All the Year Round*, and are, each in its own way, small masterpieces beloved of students of Dickens. *Great Expectations* is a return to the excellence of *David Copperfield*, while the *Tale of Two Cities* has an isolated excellence of its own. *Our Mutual Friend* (1865) completes the trio of long novels of which *Bleak House* and *Little Dorrit* are the other members; the atmosphere is equally gloomy, and the more humorous portions stand out in equally lurid relief. Rogue Riderhood, Mr. Venus, and the immortal Silas Wegg, are fresh creations in Dickens' best manner; but the Veneerings, the Lammles, and other members of the same society, are of the Skewton-Bagstock genus. The falling-off which, even before *David Copperfield*, was conspicuous, is irretrievable in *Our Mutual Friend*, and the incomplete *Edwin Drood* (1870) shows no reaction. Soon after Dickens' return from a second visit to America, which, in spite of *Martin Chuzzlewit*, was a greater triumph even than the first, he was suddenly smitten down by apoplexy, the penalty of an overtasked brain, at his house of Gadshill, near Rochester, and died the next day, June 9, 1870. He is buried in Westminster Abbey.

§ 13. We have already indicated the intrinsic elements of Dickens' work, and only a few accidents remain to be noticed. When we speak of the decline of his powers, the epithet is merely relative, and serves to point out the extraordinary character of his genius. We may regret the errors of taste to which he succumbed, his grotesque lachrymosity and his love of fantastic horror; but there is not a single novel—not even *Edwin Drood* —which is not a distinguished contribution to English literature, and has not left its mark upon the mind of every English reader.

Dickens' characters: their relation to real life.

The person who knows nothing of Sam Weller, of Mrs. Gamp, of Mr. F.'s aunt, or of Silas Wegg, is not far removed from the illiterate. No characters are more intensely familiar to us than the portraits of this immense gallery. We may confuse Scott's people and forget many of Thackeray's, but, for anyone who has read his Dickens thoroughly, each of these people has an individuality not easily forgotten. This is not as much as to say that they are faithful portraits from real life. We know that they are magnificent caricatures, and that they are as impossible as it is impossible that the world is flat. They might inhabit a world on Mercator's projection, with the sun perpetually travelling round its angles ; many of them would even then be impossible still. But the fact is that, as creations of pure fancy, with a superficial resemblance to mankind, they are inimitable ; and he who would desert Mr. Micawber to find a compensation in the more photographic atmosphere of modern fiction would be very unwise. Fastidious readers may accuse Dickens of vulgarity and profess their inability to admire characters whose life often depends on their repetition of a single phrase ; but they may travel farther and fare worse. From *Pickwick* to *Edwin Drood* every page of Dickens is worth reading and adds to the pure pleasure which is the best thing we can derive from literature.

This triumph was achieved without any formal excellence. Form is almost incredibly absent from Dickens' novels. It is incorrect to deny them a plot, for we feel an amazing interest in the growth of the story. But the books appeared in serial parts, and the plot was therefore left to work itself out automatically, while underplots developed themselves and sometimes took the chief place in the story. To make an abstract, say, of the story of *Bleak House*, would require a superhuman memory ; to do it with the book before one would lead to inevitable confusion. *Pickwick* is a series of droll sketches bound together by the thinnest of links. The central incident of *Nicholas Nickleby* and *David Copperfield* must be a matter of taste. And yet all the threads of the story are closely connected. It is possible to follow out the adventures of a single character by reading a chapter here and a chapter there, but they have their definite relation to the rest of the book, and their logical sequence is incomprehensible without a reference to the principal narrative. Of course, in speaking of logical sequence and Dickens' works in the same breath, we limit ourselves to the understanding that his plots are conceived in the same extravagant and improbable manner as his characters, and bear the same reference to ordinary life that his people bear to human nature. Again, he is not a great master of style, if we judge him by the standard of great English prose. He was not one of those novelists whose peculiarities of manner become the watchwords of a school.

Absence of form and style from the novels.

But in no other case was the style so entirely the man, or so entirely emblematic of his work. Dickens was no purist; and when he wrote finely he was too often pretentious and melodramatic. Nowhere in his work is there a passage of intrinsically beautiful English; but this is no cause for blame. Style is an individual matter; and, if Dickens' style was wanting in distinction, it had individuality enough and to spare.

Moreover, Dickens was a great artist. His people are abnormal in themselves and in their doings, but their surroundings are ordinarily true to life. We have mentioned the Black Country in *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Hard Times*—pictures which none but an artist sensitive to impressions could have drawn. *Dickens' London: his value as an artist.* But his great claim to reputation on this head is that he was in a peculiar sense the painter of London. Since Ben Jonson, no one had arisen who knew his London so well, whose early training had brought him into contact with the common Londoner, and had drowned horror in curiosity. Everyone who has gone down the Thames from London Bridge has seen a dozen places by the river-side that might do duty for Quilp's wharf; everyone, in walking through the London streets, has seen houses which immediately recall scenes in Dickens. We learn to connect his characters with certain parts of London; to seek Mr. Micawber in the purlieus of City Road, or Messrs. Bob Sawyer and Benjamin Allen in the Borough. Dickens' London is not the London of our own day, and its landmarks are fast disappearing; but it is the London of the early Victorian era drawn to the life, with all its disagreeable circumstances thrown into relief—the Marshalsea, the Fleet, the slums of Southwark and St. Giles'. He did not altogether confine himself to London. In many scenes, which have less historical interest, but an equally great power of realistic description, he went to his beloved towns of Rochester and Chatham, and drew pictures which may still be recognised. But, in effect, it is in his pictures of London that his artistic greatness consists; in the reality of the houses in which his people lived and the streets through which they walked. His realism surpasses Smollett's, and is less distorted by ill-temper. He is greater than the Elizabethan realists, in that they have left us a number of brilliant sketches, while he has given us the life of a whole city in his novels. Not even Jonson himself, in *Bartholomew Fair* or *The Alchemist*, where he used all the weapons of brutality and spoke out with no reticence, makes a greater impression than Dickens with his easy temper and good-humoured satire. As Balzac painted Paris, so Dickens painted his own city; and thus the contemporaries, so unlike in many ways, so curiously similar in others, come together again. Dickens left behind him no band of imitators; he did not, like Balzac, give the direct impetus to a certain class of

novel; his work remains solitary of its kind. But, from whatever point we consider it, whether from the side of its extravagance or of its accuracy, its popularity is overwhelming. Dickens is not one of those novelists whose fastidiousness makes them either loved or hated; he frankly delighted in common and vulgar things, and it is just this that constitutes the universal appeal of his work.

§ 14. WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY, although older than Dickens, did not make his mark until ten years later. He was born at Calcutta and educated at the Charterhouse and Trinity College, Cambridge. He took no degree, but contributed to a magazine called the *Snob*, in which he showed some foretaste of his literary power. The work of his earlier years, done principally for *Fraser's Magazine*, is extremely interesting, but at the time attracted as little attention as the manifestly inferior drawings with which he illustrated it. He published in Fraser some stories, two novels, *Barry Lyndon* (1844)—an admirable narrative, due to his study of *Jonathan Wild the Great*—and *Catherine* (1839–40), which deals with the criminal class in a less satisfactory way. *Barry Lyndon* was, however, perfect of its kind, and illustrated, as clearly as any of his later novels, Thackeray's command of humour and delicate irony, and that leaning to cynicism with which he has been short-sightedly reproached. The *Paris Sketch-Book* (1840), and the more consecutive *Irish Sketch-Book* (1843) were the first of those miscellanies in which he recorded his curious impressions of things in general and gossiped easily with his readers. At the end of the decade he began to write for *Punch*, and contributed to the early volumes *The Book of Snobs* (1848), a third miscellany, in which he appeared as a not too charitable critic of his fellows, combining a singular censoriousness of tone with a no less unusual tendency to pathos. The famous chapters which describe the household of Major Ponto are typical, in their odd and paradoxical humour, of all his work. A similar eccentricity is seen in the scattered Fraser contributions known as the *Yellowplush Papers* (1838–40), and especially in their principal member, *The Amours of Mr. Deuceace*. Yellowplush, in spite of his glorious orthography—by far the best instance in English of misspelling as a form of humour—is really a very hard and selfish person, whose only anxiety is for himself; and yet from time to time he deals a sudden stroke of pathos which is simply enhanced by its ludicrous surroundings. It is not difficult to see that *The Amours of Mr. Deuceace*, superficially amusing, is one of the most tragic and melancholy stories that could be written. It is certainly one of Thackeray's finest things. The *Novels by Eminent Hands*, contributed to *Punch* (1847) by "C. Jeames de la Pluche," are a series of inimitable parodies of popular novelists. Some of them have shared, as is natural, the fate of the books of which they made

W. M. THACKERAY (1811–1863).

fun; but *George de Barnwell* and *Coalingsby* will live as long as *Eugene Aram* and *Coningsby*, and *Barbazure* will preserve the memory of G. P. R. James more certainly than his own novels.

These were the essays which led up to *Vanity Fair*. This great novel, which appeared in parts in 1847 and 1848, was the most remarkable book of its kind since *Pickwick*, and was its author's *chef d'œuvre*. If Dickens' pedigree came through Smollett, Thackeray's came through Fielding; and, just as in *Barry Lyndon* he had imitated and improved upon *Jonathan Wild*, in *Vanity Fair* he followed the model of *Tom Jones*. *Vanity Fair* is not so great a book as its exemplar. Thackeray had not that Shakespearean grasp of life which was Fielding's; his observation of the surface was minute in the extreme, but his faculty of insight was very limited. His moral standard was high, but narrow; he hated vice and adored virtue. His garrulous digressions, very much in Fielding's manner without Fielding's dignity, are all moral essays, rules of conduct laid down by a man who strives to conceal his earnestness beneath a cynical polish and a studied indifference to high motive. *Vanity Fair*, as a humorous masterpiece, as a picture of society, is incomparable; as a novel of character it has serious defects. The obvious thing which meets the reader is that all its *dramatis personæ* are more or less disagreeable. The most prominent figure, Becky Sharp, has a very equivocal reputation, and in all her doings from first to last is reprehensible. Of the two families chiefly concerned in this "novel without a hero," the amiability of the Sedleys and the hardness of the Osbornes are equally uninviting. The whole Crawley family, with the exception of Lady Jane and of Rawdon in his later days, is nothing less than disreputable. If *Vanity Fair* were the only novel of Thackeray which remained to us, the real greatness of heart and zeal for virtue which distinguished him might possibly be undervalued. Thackeray's humour, delicate and flexible as it is, always leans to the bitter and satiric side; and *Vanity Fair* is full of passages—the obituary of Lord Steyne for example—which reach the extreme limit of irony. His almost morbid sense of the difference between masks and faces, his scorn of pretence and pose, carried this prevalent irony farther than it should have gone. The noble character of Major Dobbin, the womanly tenderness of Lady Jane Crawley, are obscured by its almost involuntary use in their description. He made Dobbin ugly and awkward, Lady Jane shy and foolish, and did not save them from ridiculous situations. Where he trod on consecrated ground, in the character of Amelia, he succeeded in creating insipidity, and, instead of painting a woman equal to Sophia Western, drew a commonplace, immature, and manifestly silly schoolgirl whose attractions are inconceiv-

"Vanity Fair" (1848).

Satire of the novel.

able. As an adequate picture of human life, *Vanity Fair* is marred by these defects of manner and invention. As a social satire, as a purely objective picture of a life which the author observed without reading himself into it, nothing, on the other hand, could be more brilliant. Becky Sharp, the unscrupulous adventuress, is of the same family as Barry Lyndon; her determination, from the day of her departure from Chiswick Mall to the fatal evening of her supper with Lord Steyne, carries her from triumph to triumph; she is a Lady Macbeth of comedy, taking the central place by virtue of her will. In view of her machinations, it is inevitable that we lose our consciousness of the disagreeable side of her character and its environment, and become her partisans, sympathising with her in her attack upon society. Similarly, the whole account of the Crawleys—the horrible old baronet, his hypocritical heir, his old sister, his clerical brother, and the ingenious Mrs. Bute Crawley—is, as humorous satire, admirable. Thackeray makes all his points unwaveringly; his aim is always direct, and the shot is unerringly clean and decisive. There are very few novels in English which give the reader so high a sense of perfect workmanship. The question of plot enters into the book very little; the construction is, however, not in the least chaotic, and we follow the various threads of the story, the separate fortunes of Becky and Amelia, as we follow the course of a chronicle which covers much historical ground without undue complexity. The style is easy and talkative, even slipshod; but Thackeray's fastidious taste and faculty of saying the right thing in the right way, his gift of phrase and the sense of humour which is never far absent from his simplest words, envelop even his solecisms with a certain distinction. Such passages as Becky Sharp's letters, or the famous description of Brussels on the day of Waterloo, have a classic place in English prose. But the dramatic power of the book is beyond criticism. In addition to the fact that the interest is always so sustained that no single chapter can be called dull, there is no undue artificiality or striving after dramatic effect. The great scene between Rawdon Crawley and Lord Steyne is the natural result of a long train of events; there is no transparent artifice employed to lead up to it; it is the natural catastrophe that must have come sooner or later.

Its general workmanship.

Thackeray's next novel, *Pendennis* (1849–50), is partly autobiographical, and is a long series of scenes and pictures of society rather than a comedy like *Vanity Fair*, which, in spite of its rambling plot, has some dramatic connection. *Pendennis* is the most garrulous and digressive of Thackeray's novels, and, in the course of its haphazard progress, is not always very engrossing. However, the opening chapters are complete in themselves, a perfect little comedy of calf-love; and Major Pendennis, Captain

"Pendennis" (1849–50).

Costigan, Harry Foker, Blanche Amory, and Alcide de Mirobolant, have all of them qualities which give a novel immortality. Thackeray, too, touched a deeper pathos here than in *Vanity Fair*. Helen Pendennis has the truth to nature in which Amelia was wanting, and the episode of her death is one of the most affecting passages in English. In his next novel, the very different *History of Henry Esmond* (1852), Thackeray showed the real greatness and tenderness of heart of which he had given only partial glimpses beneath his ironical humour. *Esmond*, like the rest of his books, is a chronicle extending over a long period of time; unlike them, it is historical, and written in the style of a past age. There was an eighteenth-century vein in Thackeray's humour, whose source he had already shown in his brilliant but not soundly critical lectures on the *English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century*. In *Esmond* he flung himself back into the age of Anne, and wrote as a contemporary of Pope and Swift might have written. The result is a magnificent historical romance, and the most finished masterpiece of the nineteenth century. It could, however, be achieved only once, and in his history of Esmond's descendants, *The Virginians* (1858–9), he failed, although writing in his natural manner, to produce a worthy sequel. In the meantime, *The Newcomes* (1854–5) had appeared—a great but unequal novel, sometimes on the level of *Vanity Fair*, sometimes far below it. A novelist who had created the Beatrix of *Esmond* could not fail to give more than ordinary interest to Ethel Newcome; but Clive, like Arthur Pendennis, is an unstable hero, who seems to be created for the express purpose of perplexing his friends and relatives. Two generations have seen in Colonel Newcome one of the most noble figures in fiction, and the verdict is not likely to be reversed. One cannot, however, admire the ruthlessness of the imagination which surrounded the close of his life with sordid persecution. The satire of the book is often more terrifying than amusing. Mrs. Hobson Newcome, with her soiled gloves and oblique references to third persons, is laughable enough; but the picture of the Duchesse d'Ivry and her *entourage* of sharpers and women of no reputation has an emphatically unpleasant side. So much, too, is crowded into the book that it becomes little more than an entertaining miscellany. In *The Virginians*, similarly, one or two episodes come into the foreground, and it is difficult, without constant study, to discern between the varieties which remain over. The last of Thackeray's long novels, *Philip* (1862), which, like *Lovel the Widower* (1861), appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine* during his editorship, is much inferior to the rest—a casual narrative of events, whose hero is an understudy of Clive Newcome, and is surrounded by circumstances that are occasionally little better than a replica of the situations in *The Newcomes*. His last novel, *Denis Duval* (1867), which promised

"Esmond" (1852).

"The Newcomes" (1855) *and later work.*

to be admirable, was cut short in its serial form by his sudden death on December 24, 1863.

§ 15. Chaotic and irregular as these novels are in their general plan, Thackeray has a place second to none among nineteenth-century novelists. He drew society as no one but Miss Austen had drawn it. To compare two novelists so different in every way would be impossible. Thackeray worked on a far larger scale and never achieved minute perfection; his work is often attractive because it is manifestly imperfect, just as the beauty of his style depends upon his casual felicity of phrase and a natural good taste which varnishes over its errors. His whole sphere of vision was wider; he wrote as a man of the world who had seen and travelled much; his sarcasm, far more withering than Miss Austen's, was tempered by a compassion of which her constant asperity was incapable. He had no invariable standard of praise and blame; sometimes he chastised unduly, at other times he forgave inexplicably. The novel, far more truly than poetry, is a criticism of life; and, if this is granted, it must be owned that Thackeray, as a critic, suffered from lapses of which few great novelists have been guilty. He had, as we have said, a gift of instinctive observation where the superficial features of life were concerned, but his perception of the secrets of human nature, profound enough to go behind the mere "humours" of his characters, was yet vague and limited. He had ideals of virtue and villainy alike, and, in drawing from reality, he added touches which were purely imaginary. Jos Sedley and Mrs. Hobson Newcome are pleasant caricatures whose obvious extravagances are only an exaggeration of human nature in its most feeble aspects. But Dobbin in *Vanity Fair* is not intentionally ludicrous; his weak qualities, in which he might justly be expected to fail, are idealised in order to exalt his singleness of purpose. Thackeray's method of idealisation is, however, not altogether fortunate. The effect of Dobbin upon most readers is an effect of caricature, which distorts without emphasising real peculiarities; his eccentricities overshadow the sterling qualities which they were intended to relieve. In the case of Colonel Newcome something of the same kind happens; his patience and submission are outside nature, and are so much exaggerated that only the great *coup* of the final scene, where Thackeray's pathos is at its manliest, saves him from ignominy. These are individual examples which, however, have a general application. The brilliant and vivid picture of society has everywhere its unreality; its relation to real life is that of Mr. Yellowplush's English to common orthography. It is accurate in the sense that it conveys its real meaning, but there are natural defects inherent in its method.

Thackeray and contemporary society.

However, as a humorist, Thackeray is open to less serious imputations. What has been said already of Fielding may be said of his great disciple. It is impossible to deny that, of the

two, Fielding was the greater humorist. His Homeric laughter, the Shakespearean truth to nature with which he laid bare the souls of his heroes, were qualities which Thackeray scarcely inherited. Fielding's comprehensiveness of vision could not be imparted even to those who could understand him best. But in one leading feature of humour Thackeray improved on his master. Fielding's careless, all-embracing view of life admitted of human charity, but was far too robust to give much expression to those tears which are never far off from laughter. His humour rings true, but has not the final delicacy which can distinguish the pathetic from the effeminate, and he consequently left this perilous side of humour alone. Thackeray, a master of roaring farce and the author of some of the most laughable things in the world, was at the same time a master of pathos. In the middle of his most humorous scenes, after he has given us a long entertainment of fun and satire and has hardened our hearts to his own mood, he turns round in amiable contradiction and, by a single phrase or sentence, moves us to tears. These sudden changes are not guiltless of theatrical effect; but his more sustained passages in this manner, where he leads up to and achieves legitimate pathos, sway us equally. And this pathetic quality, inasmuch as it is part and parcel of Thackeray's humour, is never merely sentimental or maudlin; its manliness is genuine because its sentiment is so real.

His humour.

Thackeray's humour, so exuberant and yet so marked by delicacy and self-restraint, has won for itself a host of admirers, while his good taste and the rare quality of his wit preclude him from universal popularity. Many, indeed, who quarrel with one star because it differs from another in glory are apt to make invidious comparisons between him and Dickens. Most people will be content to admire both of the great artists who worked on so different lines. Thackeray painted a society in which Dickens showed himself incompetent; but, if Dickens could not have drawn Becky Sharp, Thackeray still less could have drawn Mrs. Gamp. Dickens' work was, at its best, the triumph of farce; at its worst, it was excellent melodrama. Thackeray worked in the larger and more difficult sphere of comedy, and could not have exercised his talent for farce and burlesque on a wider scale. Such stories as *The Great Hoggarty Diamond* (1849) and *The Ravenswing* (1843), which show Thackeray in his lightest mood, would not make a man's reputation, although they might be remembered as perfect *jeux d'esprit*. And, although it is not easy to imagine Dickens treating such subjects, it was in this kind of writing that he did his best, and out of such material, fantastic and improbable, that he constructed his immense and complicated masterpieces. In the end, Dickens produced a body of work which is, as a whole, more complete and less perplexing. Thackeray, with far greater versatility, left

Comparison with Dickens.

much behind him that seems unfinished and capable of improvement. The *Roundabout Papers* (1863), containing some of his latest work, are the best example of his power as an admirable and talkative essayist—a later development of the admirable beginning which we see in the *Book of Snobs*, the three early sketch-books, and the drawings and jokes of the *Christmas Books*. His genius for burlesque is seen in three sketches as different as *The Rose and The Ring* (1855), *Sultan Stork* (1842), and *Major Gogheegan* (1838–9)—the last perhaps a little strained in places. His picturesque talent as historian and critic is evident in the papers on *The Four Georges* (1861) and *English Humorists* (1853). As a writer of comic verse—and of verse, too, that is charmingly simple and pathetic—he is well known. *Bouillabaisse*, the *Sailor's Farewell to his Sweetheart*, *Sultan Saladin*, *Werther and Charlotte*, the *Ballads of Policeman X*, and Becky Sharp's songs in *Vanity Fair*, are the best examples out of many. And, when we remember that the acute and unsympathetic critic of *Vanity Fair*, the unsparing satirist of *Barry Lyndon*, was also the tender and compassionate biographer of *Esmond*, the singularity of Thackeray's genius is evident. Its somewhat fragmentary character is also manifest. Yet, while some readers may be attracted by the fulness of his humour, and others repelled by the contradiction between his bitter sarcasm and his lapses into tenderness; while some may praise and others may blame him for his lack of that genial vulgarity which has given Dickens his place in everybody's affections, his place among our novelists cannot be doubted. He is the third in time of the five great writers of prose fiction who have founded their work upon English life, seeing it with an unexampled greatness of humour and breadth of vision. Fielding was the first, Jane Austen the second. Scott, the master of romance, and Dickens, the master of fantasy, are outside the group. While Thackeray was still alive, the two remaining novelists entered the field—George Eliot and Mr. George Meredith.

His minor writings.

His place in the history of the novel.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

OTHER NOVELISTS.

JOHN BANIM (1798–1842) of Kilkenny, has been called the "Scott of Ireland." It was in avowed imitation of Scott that he, in collaboration with his elder brother MICHAEL BANIM (1796–1874), began the series of novels known as *The O'Hara Tales*, which dealt with the life of the Irish peasantry, confining themselves mostly to its tragic and melodramatic side. The work of the two Banims is very similar. The younger, who began by writing poetry, had the greater imagination. Neither had an overpowering sense of humour, and the great defect of their work is that, side by side with

much power, picturesque force, and eloquence, there exists a fatal tendency to exaggeration and overstrained passion, with the result that their novels are now little more than literary curiosities. The first series of *The O'Hara Tales*, containing *The Fetches* by John Banim and *Crohoore of the Bill-Hook* by Michael, appeared in 1825.

MARGUERITE, COUNTESS of BLESSINGTON (1789–1849), the great leader of London society for many years, was an Irishwoman. Her maiden name was Power and she was born near Clonmel. The curious story of her life does not concern us here. She was a lady of incurable literary tendencies, and, in 1822, four years after her marriage to her second husband, Lord Blessington, she published *The Magic Lantern*, anonymous sketches of London life. Eleven years later her extravagances led her to take definitely to authorship and journalism. She wrote many novels, from the Irish story of *Grace Cassidy* (1833) down to *Country Quarters* (1850), all except *Strathern* (1843) enjoying the orthodox form of three volumes, and dealing, for the most part, with fashionable life. She edited the *Book of Beauty* and the *Keepsake*, wrote a certain amount of weak poetry, and contributed to the early numbers of the *Daily News*. In April, 1849, she went bankrupt and removed to Paris, where she died early in the following June. She is not a great, but a distinctly curious, literary figure.

MARY BRUNTON (1778–1818), *née* Balfour, was born in the Orkneys and married the Rev. Alexander Brunton, afterwards professor of Oriental languages at Edinburgh. She wrote two novels with a strong moral purpose, *Self-Control* (1810) and *Discipline* (1814), both of which enjoyed some success. Her further work was brought to a close by her premature death in 1818. In 1819 her husband published her life and literary remains.

WILLIAM CARLETON (1794–1869), the son of a Tyrone farmer, was a very prolific novelist and critic of Irish character, now chiefly remembered by his *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry* (1830 and 1833). This, his earliest work, was followed by nearly twenty novels and collections of short stories. Almost his only point in common with the Banims, his contemporaries, was his liking for exaggerated melodrama. He had, however, a strong sense of humour, and there are few of his tales where his realism is not mixed with a constant stream of gaiety.

FREDERICK CHAMIER (1796–1870), captain in the navy, wrote novels in direct but not very good imitation of Marryat. These, mostly written after his retirement and settlement at Waltham Abbey, are now almost forgotten. *Ben Brace* (1836), *The Arethusa* (1837), etc., are titles which speak for themselves. He also published an enlarged edition of James' *Naval History* (1837), and, later in life, some travel-sketches and reminiscences.

THOMAS CROFTON CROKER (1798–1854), the son of a major in the army, was born at Cork and swells the list of literary Irishmen. He was first and foremost an antiquary, ranging Munster in search of folklore and popular legends; and his chief book, *The Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland* (1825), was welcomed by all archæologists, and chiefly by Sir Walter Scott. Its stories, at the same time, were a very charming addition to Irish fiction; and its author, in the intervals of antiquarian research, wrote one or two other works of fiction, including *Legends of the Lakes* (1829) and *The Adventures of Barney Mahoney* (1852). He also edited books on Ireland for learned societies, and made excursions in Elizabethan literature. He died in London at the age of fifty-six.

WILLIAM NUGENT GLASCOCK (1787?–1847), captain in the navy, saw much active service and did not retire until a few months before his death, which took place in Ireland. He belongs, like Chamier, to the sub-division of the Marryat school of novelists. His chief work lay in the department of short stories and reminiscences. His *Naval Service, or Officers' Manual* (1836), was, in its time, of real importance to

naval students, and achieved a considerable reputation beyond England.

GEORGE ROBERT GLEIG (1796–1888), chaplain-general of the forces, was the son of George Gleig, Bishop of Brechin, and, before taking Holy Orders, served in the Peninsular and American wars. He had the gift of miscellaneous writing, and his first years as a country clergyman were prolific in military stories, rural novels, and military history. He was a contributor to *Fraser* and *Blackwood*, and his *Life of Wellington* (1862) has retained considerable popularity. Of his military fiction, which keeps very close to history, the best example is *The Chelsea Pensioners* (1829). Macaulay's great essay on Warren Hastings was suggested by Gleig's *Life of Warren Hastings* (1841). He also wrote a *Life of Lord Clive* (1848).

BASIL HALL (1788–1844), captain in the navy and the son of a Scottish baronet, demands mention here, not indeed as a regular novelist, but as one of the naval miscellanists whose name stands with those of Marryat, Glascock, and Chamier. His chief book is the autobiographical *Fragments of Voyages and Travels*, which appeared in three series of three volumes each between 1831 and 1833. He died insane in Haslar Hospital.

THEODORE EDWARD HOOK (1788–1841), the great wit of the Regency and a very remarkable minor novelist, was the son of a musician and composer. Although he was for a short time at Harrow he learned very little; and, while still in his 'teens, was engaged in writing farces and burlesques. He became very popular in London as a jester, and, in 1812, was made accountant-general and treasurer of Mauritius. His unbusinesslike habits brought him, a few years later, to ruin and imprisonment. He subsequently became editor of *John Bull*, and wrote a number of novels which appeared from 1826 to 1829 as *Sayings and Doings*. These were full of satirical caricature, and were each written on the text of some common and well-known proverb. The narratives are of slight construction and contain no very profound views of character, but their caricature of manners is irresistibly droll, and Dickens owed not a little in this respect to Hook. After *Sayings and Doings*, his novels —*Maxwell* (1830), *Gilbert Gurney* (1836), and *Gurney Married* (1838) —become little more than sketches of the society in which he mixed. *Jack Brag* (1836), the story of the unsuccessful attempts of a vulgar pretender to creep into aristocratic society, is still read; but the rest of his books, with all their wit and humour, are unfortunately forgotten. Hook, until his death—he died bankrupt at Fulham—was received in society as a wit, story-teller, and singer; but he was incurably afflicted with the passion for high society, which he had ridiculed in *Jack Brag*, and his novels, hasty and incomplete in execution, were written to furnish him with funds for his extravagance. He died a thoroughly disappointed man, after a life in melancholy contrast to his superficial gaiety.

EDWARD HOWARD (d. 1841) was the friend of Marryat at sea and his sub-editor on *The Metropolitan Magazine*. He was the author of miscellaneous novels, biographies, and poems on naval subjects; but, unfortunately for his fame, his chief story, *Rattlin the Reefer* (1836), having been supervised by Marryat, was put down to the account of the better-known author.

ELIZABETH INCHBALD (1753–1821), *née* Simpson, is chiefly known as a fertile dramatist and popular actress. She was born at Stanningfield, near Bury St. Edmunds, and, after several attempts to go on the stage, obtained her wish by marrying an actor in 1772. He died in 1779, soon after which she retired and took to literature, which proved very profitable. Her dramas were largely adaptations of foreign plays; and her novels, *A Simple Story* (1791) and *Nature and Art* (1796), give her a more enduring claim on our remembrance. She edited the *British Theatre* (1806–9) and chose the plays for *The Modern Theatre* and *A Collection of Farces* (both 1809). In fiction she had more than usual command of character and passion. She was a picturesque figure in society, extremely beautiful,

and a Roman Catholic. She died at Kensington House in 1821.

DOUGLAS WILLIAM JERROLD (1803–1857) was born in London, but spent his early life at Sheerness, where his father managed a small theatre. He had very little education, went to sea at an early age as a midshipman, and, when peace came, left the navy and became a printer's apprentice. He soon took to journalism, criticising, among other things, Weber's *Der Freischütz*, and from journalism proceeded to dramatic writing. His earliest success was *Black-Eyed Susan* (1829), and he wrote in all something like forty plays. Meanwhile, he also wrote prose fiction, and, between 1845 and 1850, produced his chief novels, *The Chronicles of Clovernook* (1846) and *A Man made of Money* (1849). There is also some excellent humorous work by him in the opening volumes of *Punch*—above all, the ever-popular *Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Lectures* (1846). At this time he was taking part in political journalism. He contributed to the *Ballot* and the *Examiner*, started a weekly newspaper called after his own name in 1846, and in 1852 became editor of *Lloyd's Newspaper*. He died at Kilburn in 1857. His brilliant wit and power of epigram were among the most remarkable of the century. His son, WILLIAM BLANCHARD JERROLD (1826–1884), also a prolific writer and journalist, succeeded him in the editorship of *Lloyd's Newspaper*. His well-known *Life of Napoleon III* (1874–1882) is perhaps more notorious than famous as a historical apology for its hero.

THOMAS HENRY LISTER (1800–1842), the first registrar-general of England and Wales, was a man of good family and considerable talent, well-known in the society of his day. He wrote a tragedy called *Epicharis* (1829), a *Life of Lord Clarendon* (1837–8), and several novels of fashionable society, the best of which is *Granby* (1826). He also edited a novel called *Anne Grey* (1834) for his sister Harriet, who was a maid-of-honour to Queen Adelaide. His widow married Sir George Cornewall Lewis.

SAMUEL LOVER (1797–1868), born in Dublin, began his life as a painter, but added to this accomplishment some skill in music and literature. In 1828 he became a member of the Royal Hibernian Academy; in 1831 he brought out his *Legends and Stories of Ireland*, and in 1837 his novel of *Rory O'More*, whose subject he had previously treated in a ballad and soon afterwards adapted as a play. He gave up painting in 1844, when his sight failed, and took to miscellaneous literary work, principally song-writing, and to giving humorous musical entertainments. Of his novels, the very amusing *Handy Andy* (1842) has always been popular; but his extraordinary versatility never raised his work beyond mediocrity. He died at St. Heliers in Jersey and was buried at Kensal Green Cemetery.

HENRY MACKENZIE (1745–1831), an Edinburgh man by birth and constant residence, takes us back rather farther than any novelist in this chapter. As a young member of the Scots bar he published his tearful novel, *The Man of Feeling* (1771), which was succeeded by *The Man of the World* (1773), and *Julia de Roubigné* (1777). These all appeared without their author's name. Mackenzie was for years a considerable literary figure in his native city. He edited periodicals of the *Spectator* kind—the *Mirror* (1779–80) and the *Lounger* (1785–7); he took a great interest in the Ossianic controversy and in the enthusiasm for German literature which attacked Edinburgh at the end of the eighteenth century. Towards the end of his life he was Comptroller of Taxes for Scotland, a position which he had gained by his political writing. As a novelist he imitated, wisely and delicately, Sterne's sentimentality; but his tearfulness had a great and far from salutary effect on contemporary fiction.

WILLIAM HAMILTON MAXWELL (1792–1850) of Newry had a rather checkered career as a soldier, a country clergyman in Connemara, and a military novelist. His extremely miscellaneous work begins with *O'Hara*, a novel published in 2825, and *Wild Sports of the West*

(1832). He also wrote Irish stories and military memoirs. Such books as *Hector O'Halloran* (1842–3) and *Captain O'Sullivan* (1846), are strongly reminiscent of Lever.

SYDNEY, LADY MORGAN (1783?–1859) was born in Dublin. Her father, Robert Owenson, was an actor, and from her early years she was used to a Bohemian fashion of living. She began to write and publish verse as early as 1801. Her first novel, *St. Clair*, belongs to 1804, and her justly celebrated, if rather undisciplined, *The Wild Irish Girl*, came out in 1806, only two years later. Her plays, poems, and romances, with her patriotism, brought her into great favour with Irish society. She was taken under the protection of Lord and Lady Abercorn, who then occupied the vice-royalty, and married their doctor, Sir T. C. Morgan. She continued to write Irish novels, which may be compared with the subsequent work of the Banims; but, going on her travels, turned from fiction to descriptive writing in her *France* (1817) and *Italy* (1821). Nothing in her later work, the chief item in which is *The O'Briens and the O'Flaherties* (1827), comes up to the level of *The Wild Irish Girl*. She became engaged in journalism, removed from Dublin to London, and, until her death in 1859, was a prominent figure in London society. She was buried in old Brompton Cemetery.

AMELIA OPIE (1769–1853), daughter of a Norwich doctor named Alderson and wife of the painter, John Opie, commended herself to her generation by her poetry and novels—chiefly by the tale of *Father and Daughter* (1801). Her father, a Unitarian and Radical, inoculated her with his views, and she felt an enthusiastic leaning towards the politics and doctrines of men like Horne Tooke and Godwin. In 1825, however, she was received into the Society of Friends, having been long under the influence of the great Quaker family, the Gurneys of Norwich. Her later years were spent in piety and charity, but her love of society continued to the end, and she never became a confirmed recluse. Her work, much praised in its day, is innocent of any serious fault; but it has not much to recommend it, and her personality was probably more interesting than her writings.

ALBERT RICHARD SMITH (1816–1860), the son of a doctor at Chertsey, was educated for his father's profession and became a member of the Royal College of Surgeons. He gave himself up, however, to literary and journalistic work, writing for *Punch* and other magazines, doing some editorial work, and producing novels and farces. His *Adventures of Mr. Ledbury* (1844) is his best-known work of fiction. He is better remembered as the humorous lecturer who, in the fifties, diverted London with the account of his ascent of Mont Blanc. He died at Fulham, and was buried in Brompton Cemetery.

CHARLOTTE SMITH (1749–1806), *née* Turner, the wife of a rich and extravagant West Indian merchant, from whom she separated about 1787, was the authoress of several novels, which were admired by Sir Walter Scott and included in his series of "British Novelists." *The Old Manor House* (1793) is the best; but neither these nor the poems which she wrote as fluently are of much value to-day.

EDWARD JOHN TRELAWNY (1792–1881), whose romantic life in the navy, and afterwards, led him into most parts of the world, is, above everything else, the faithful painter of his friends Shelley and Byron, in the *Recollections* (1858), afterwards called the *Records of Shelley, Byron, and the Author*. He was intimately connected with the tragedy of Shelley's death, took the chief part at his cremation, and bought the ground for his grave. He also took part in the war of Hellenic independence, and arrived at Missolonghi just too late for Byron's death. As a novelist he obtained some popularity by his more or less autobiographical *Adventures of a Younger Son* (1881). He was buried beside Shelley in the cemetery at Rome.

FRANCES TROLLOPE (1780–1863), *née* Milton, the mother of Anthony

Trollope, wrote a large number of novels. Her masterpiece is *The Widow Barnaby* (1838), the picture of a pretentious, self-assured, and vulgar woman, with a coarse, handsome face and imperturbable self-possession. This character is typical of Mrs. Trollope's faults; it is too coarsely and violently drawn. She hardly knew where to stop, and offended against the laws of comic writing in making her characters not only ridiculous but odious. She had no true conception of human nature, and her plots were very slight; but she wrote vivaciously and amusingly. She died at Florence, where she had settled with her son, the novelist and historian, Thomas Adolphus Trollope.

ROBERT PLUMER WARD (1765–1846), M.P. for Cockermouth and Haslemere, who held several political situations under Tory governments, became in later life a fashionable novelist, like his junior contemporary, Lister. *Tremaine* (1825) and *De Vere* (1827) were both cleverly written, and have a distant likeness in manner and contents to the *Coningsby* or *Lothair* of a more brilliant novelist. A subsequent novel, *De Clifford*, was published in 1841. Ward was a conscientious politician, and did much painstaking work for the Admiralty. He was married three times, and died at the house of his third father-in-law, Sir George Anson, Governor of Chelsea Hospital.

CHAPTER XXIV.

PROSE WRITERS AND ESSAYISTS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

§ 1. The romantic movement and English prose. § 2. The growth of periodicals. *The Edinburgh Review*: FRANCIS JEFFREY, SYDNEY SMITH, and LORD BROUGHAM. § 3. *The Quarterly Review*: WILLIAM GIFFORD. § 4. *Blackwood's Magazine*: JOHN WILSON and JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART. § 5. CHARLES LAMB and *The London Magazine*. § 6. WILLIAM HAZLITT and LEIGH HUNT. § 7. THOMAS DE QUINCEY. § 8. WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR. § 9. THOMAS CARLYLE. § 10. JOHN RUSKIN: *Modern Painters, Stones of Venice*, etc. § 11. Life and work after 1860. § 12. WALTER PATER and JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

§ 1. THE history of English prose in the nineteenth century closely follows the history of the romantic movement in poetry. The attempt to throw off conventional restraint in one harmony was accompanied by a similar revolution in the other. At the end of the eighteenth century it was openly assumed that, in order to write prose, a man must lay aside his natural manner and twist his thoughts into a pompous and unelastic diction, which was considered the proper form of literary English. It was in faithful imitation of Johnson that this canon was observed; and the same discrepancy which we notice between the vivacity of Johnson's talk, as recorded by Boswell, and his sententiousness of writing, as exhibited in the *Rambler*, exists in all the early prose writers of the nineteenth century. The spell of Johnson rested even upon the novel, which was already making its way for itself. Miss Austen's neatness and cleanness of style were her own, but the primness and formality which they cannot conceal are of the eighteenth century. Scott cast almost every sentence of his novels into this laborious and artificial mould; his heroes and heroines talk like moral essayists bred on the *Rambler* and Mrs. Chapone. Johnson's services as a guide were past. Had they been retained much longer, English prose would have been landed in a hopeless desert of unlimited sterility. Fortunately, the influences at work on literature came to its aid. We have seen that most of the great romantic

The change in English prose.

poets were prose writers. Wordsworth's prefaces to *Lyrical Ballads*, which keep so much of the eighteenth-century manner about them, are nevertheless an obvious sign of a new spirit in prose. Scott, maintaining all the pompous traditions of Georgian form, showed, in his criticisms and miscellaneous writings, appreciations and tastes which would have been incomprehensible to a previous generation. Southey freed himself more thoroughly from conventional triteness to use an excellent, if somewhat formal, prose style. Coleridge went still farther. Under the influence of German teaching his thought expanded and his style assumed individuality. He abandoned the conventional use of words and, to convey unusual thoughts, sought and found unexpected phrases, employing English as a handmaid to his ideas and not as an inanimate collection of words and rules. We see the same tendency in the letters of Byron, Shelley, and Keats; nor must we forget that Shelley's prose, although it marks no great epoch, is as transparently beautiful and original as his poetry. The influence of these men, the recognised apostles of nineteenth-century literature, has its practical bearing upon the great change in prose whose fruit is so evident at the present day.

§ 2. The force which acted directly on the new prose is, however, to be traced to a different origin. Early in the nineteenth century the periodical began to assume a new shape, entirely different from the Addisonian essay or from the undistinguished criticisms of the late eighteenth century. In 1802 the establishment of *The Edinburgh Review*, a quarterly magazine which espoused Whig principles, marked the beginning of the great critical periodicals. Its founder and, from 1803 to 1829, its editor, was FRANCIS JEFFREY, a young Edinburgh advocate, who, after a Scottish education at Edinburgh High School and Glasgow University, went for a year to Queen's College, Oxford. He returned to read law in Edinburgh, and was called to the bar in 1794. Some time later, he fell in with Sydney Smith, who was there as tutor to the son of an English squire, Mr. Hicks Beach of Netheravon, and, in conjunction with other writers, founded the new magazine. The idea seems to have been Sydney Smith's; but, before long, the conduct of the periodical was resigned to Jeffrey, who not only edited every number with his own personal corrections, but wrote numerous articles for it himself. He maintained his autocracy for twenty-six years, giving it up in 1829, when he was appointed Dean of Faculty. In 1830 his services to his party were further rewarded with the post of Lord Advocate, and in 1834 he was made a judge and received his life-peerage.

Periodicals: "The Edinburgh Review." FRANCIS, LORD JEFFREY (1773–1850).

When we take the early attitude of the *Edinburgh* into account we must remember that it was the organ of a political party and that it associated literature very closely with politics. Jeffrey

had been brought up a Tory, and severed himself very gradually from his early connections; nor was it until a few years after its foundation that the *Edinburgh* pledged itself to Whiggism. When it did, the character of its criticism was hindered by the fact that it was chained to one point of view. Jeffrey was no obscurantist; he had the utmost sympathy with the forward movement in literature, and very little in common with the stilted graces of the preceding century. He himself wrote in an eloquent and not unpicturesque style, which became Macaulay's chief model, and, although eminently literary and artificial, is never dreary or barren. But his criticism was founded upon a system which demanded a cut-and-dried respectability from every author; and while, on the one hand, he attacked all irregularity in literature from the standpoint of a severe moralist, he used, on the other, all the weapons of a politician to prove that everyone differing from his own opinions was insane or immoral. It is fairly certain that Brougham wrote the famous article on Byron, but it was Jeffrey who was directly responsible for that ridiculous piece of injustice, entirely out of proportion to the circumstances that provoked it. It is quite improbable that he would have attacked Wordsworth so often and so bitterly, or have refrained so long from praising Scott, had they been Whigs like himself. Nor is it unlikely that, had Jeffrey been anything but the voice of a powerful magazine with a well-defined attitude of its own, he would have been the soundest and greatest critic of his day. His articles, whose harshness was only natural in the *Edinburgh*, have, in the isolation of a separate volume, a certain short-sightedness and injustice, and on this account their merits are often misrepresented and their author's position misunderstood.

Jeffrey's style and methods of criticism.

Jeffrey's great collaborator in the *Edinburgh* was SYDNEY SMITH, two years his senior. This very remarkable man possessed the qualities which formed the necessary complement to Jeffrey's critical faculty. Jeffrey was not remarkable for wit or humour, although, like many unhumorous people, he could be very sarcastic; and further, he was essentially a critic of books. Sydney Smith's wit and humour, on the contrary, were so inseparable from himself, and have come down to us in so many anecdotes, that we, who have left off the habit of reading his works, are apt to fall into the error of thinking him a clerical Joe Miller; while, again, he was a far more able critic of political measures and pamphlets than of literature. His father was an eccentric gentleman of property, who wandered restlessly over England, unable to find a house to his mind. Sydney, who was born at Woodford in Essex, went to Winchester, and, following the happy and unruffled career of a Wykehamist foundation scholar in those days of unreformed societies, proceeded to a scholarship and fellowship at New College, Oxford. Taking Holy Orders in 1794, he became curate of Netheravon on Salisbury Plain, and went

SYDNEY SMITH (1771–1845).

with the local squire, Mr. Hicks Beach, to Edinburgh, where he met Jeffrey. After three years in London, during which he lectured on Moral Philosophy at the Royal Institution, the Whig government in 1806 gave him the living of Foston-le-Clay, near York. He did not go, however, to his parsonage until, in 1808, the Clergy Residence Bill obliged him to go north. Meanwhile, in 1807, he published his most famous work, *Peter Plymley's Letters on the Subject of the Catholics*, the best example of his wit and satire, and of a humour which could at one and the same time indulge in caustic personalities and yet preserve its unique delicacy. In 1828 he obtained a non-residentiary stall at Bristol, and exchanged Foston for the living of Combe Florey, near Taunton. Eventually, when Lord Grey came into office in 1831, he was given a canonry at St. Paul's, which he retained till his death. His later publications were his *Letters to Archdeacon Singleton* (1837–9), in which he supported, with all his customary wit, the principle of cathedral establishments, and a collection of the essays he had written for *The Edinburgh Review* (1839). As a militant champion of Whiggism and the dry, worldly Churchmanship which sets constitutional principles before spiritual considerations, he was singularly formidable. Among Englishmen, few have obtained such distinction by the mere force of exuberant wit and the faculty of making their opponents appear ludicrous.

The third of the *Edinburgh* group, HENRY PETER, LORD BROUGHAM AND VAUX, was five years younger than Jeffrey and seven years than Sydney Smith. Like Jeffrey he was educated at the Edinburgh High School, and passed through the University, eventually going to the Scots bar. He wrote for the magazine from its beginning, and was for many years very fertile in essays and reviews; but, consumed with ambition, left Edinburgh in 1805 and settled in London. He made his name at the bar and as a Whig member of Parliament; and, had he possessed the gift of retaining popularity, his defence of Queen Caroline might have made him the most popular minister of the Crown during the nineteenth century. But he was unfortunately a victim to self-conceit and hatred of his rivals; and, although the Reform ministry which made Jeffrey Lord Advocate, and Sydney Smith a canon, made him Lord Chancellor, he proved himself so disagreeable a colleague that his party abandoned him, and his place in politics was gone a few years later. He lived to be ninety, busying himself with those schemes for popularising knowledge which, somewhat earlier, had called down on him Thomas Love Peacock's sarcasm, and now and then entering into politics as a free lance. His main contributions to literature are his *Edinburgh* articles, which deserve consideration not merely because they are so numerous, but on account of their weighty sense and the critical genius which, in a certain sense, they undoubtedly show. In addition to these there are the *Speeches*—

LORD BROUGHAM (1778–1868).

some of them violent and unreasonable, others, like the celebrated defence of Queen Caroline, splendid examples of forensic eloquence—and the pleasant *Sketches of Statesmen in the time of George III* (1839–43). Brougham wrote what may be called an *Edinburgh* style, more ponderous than Jeffrey or Macaulay, but sharing many of their characteristics, and undeniably belonging to the same family. Like them, too, he was stronger in sarcasm than in genuine humour. His literary as well as his political career was spoiled by an incapacity for seeing things in their right proportions, and recognising anybody greater than himself.

§ 3. For the first few years of its existence the *Edinburgh* had no rival; its authority in matters of literature and taste became almost paramount. But, as it exerted its influence entirely on behalf of the Whig party, then and for many years in opposition, the growth of a Tory review became only a matter of time. *The Quarterly Review* was founded in 1809 by John Murray, with the assistance of Canning and the leading Tory politicians, and was actually the result of a secession of Tory writers from the *Edinburgh*. From the first it answered all expectations. Such men as Scott, who had written for the rival magazine, and Southey, joined its staff and became habitual contributors to its numbers. Its first editor was WILLIAM GIFFORD, who held his post from 1809 to 1824. He was not altogether a great man of letters, and, as a critic, has a very unfortunate reputation; but he was a skilful journalist with a bitter and satiric humour. He had been born, fifty-two years earlier, at the little Devonshire town of Ashburton, and might have ended life, as he began it, as a shoemaker's apprentice, had not his ability been recognised early. By the generosity of some Ashburton friends, he was sent to Exeter College, Oxford, where he acquired considerable scholarship and attracted more notice. His literary ideal was classical and Johnsonian, and he made his fame by a pair of brilliant Juvenalian satires, *The Baviad* (1794) and *The Mæviad* (1795), utterly annihilating Robert Merry—the self-styled "Della Crusca"—and the worthless poets of *The British Album*. Later on he joined with Canning in *The Anti-Jacobin* (1797–8), published a translation of Juvenal (1802), and edited several of the Elizabethan dramatists. His zeal in the cause of good writing, and his scholarly work on the poets who became so popular with the chief romantic writers, go far to absolve him from the charge of obscurantism so often preferred against him; but his influence was mainly reactionary; and the bitter personalities with which he assailed Leigh Hunt, Keats, and the Cockney school, while their immediate effect has been exaggerated, have had a disastrous influence on his subsequent fame. Of the other names associated with the *Quarterly* at its start—of Scott, Southey, and Canning—we have already

"The Quarterly."

WILLIAM GIFFORD (1756–1826).

spoken. Of its second editor, Lockhart, we shall speak immediately.

§ 4. The second Tory magazine which was started to counteract the influence of *The Edinburgh Review* appeared in Scotland eight years later than the *Quarterly*, and with aims and methods somewhat different. *Blackwood's Magazine* was not only a review: it contained original and imaginative work, and, in this respect, was the parent of all the monthly magazines which are so familiar a feature of English life. At first, it was notorious for its partisan malignity, and nothing but its extraordinary brilliance could have prolonged its life. The founder and editor was William Blackwood, an Edinburgh publisher, but the ruling spirit of the magazine for many years was the eccentric JOHN WILSON, better known by his *sobriquet* of "Christopher North." Wilson was the son of a rich merchant at Paisley, and was educated at Glasgow University and Magdalen College, Oxford. His enthusiasm for the romantic movement led him early to the Lakes, where he settled down as a country gentleman, living at Elleray on Windermere and associating with the Lake Poets. His two poems, *The Isle of Palms* (1812) and *The City of the Plague* (1816), show the influence of contemporary poetry very strongly, but have little excellence of their own. Wilson was not a practical person. In 1815, when he was in his thirtieth year, he lost his fortune and went to Edinburgh in pursuit of literary work. Two years after, *Blackwood* was founded, and Wilson began to pour forth article after article with extraordinary fertility. His chief contribution to the magazine was the serial miscellany known as *Noctes Ambrosianæ* (1822–35), which, under the form of dialogues between "Christopher North," a more or less imaginary person called Timothy Tickler (identified with Wilson's maternal uncle Sym), and the "Shepherd," an idealised portrait of James Hogg, discussed every subject under the sun. In these and his other articles, which are innumerable and leave few subjects untouched, he adopted a romantic style which, in its flashes of eloquence and its turbid ecstasy, was as far removed from the rigid literary diction of the eighteenth century as anything could be. In discussing his work the *Quarterly* said, "Far above all his contemporaries, and, indeed, above writers of the same class in any age, he soars as a rhapsodist." De Quincey, indeed, surpassed him in his own style; otherwise the criticism is strictly true. It must be observed, however, that this style, although suited to the peculiar convolutions of Wilson's mind, flies from one extreme of artificiality to the other. Its lyric raptures are quite as unnatural and far more open to the charge of premeditation than Johnson's balanced and mechanical periods. No standard of taste was possible for such a style, which may be admirable in one line and sink to unimaginable depths in the next. Yet Wilson was the first of

"Blackwood's Magazine."

JOHN WILSON (1785–1854).

Wilson's style.

the great journalists to show his complete emancipation from the old mode of writing, and to abandon a somewhat dreary classicism of style for a picturesque Gothic extravagance of manner. He was for many years among the most popular of Scottish writers, and his *Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life* (1822) and *The Trials of Margaret Lindsay* (1823) contain some worthy examples of *genre* painting. In 1820 he became Professor of Moral Philosophy in Edinburgh University, and, until his death, was a leading figure in Edinburgh society, steadfastly maintaining the literary claims of the Modern Athens against those of London. He resigned his professorship in 1851, and died three years later.

Hogg, of whom we have already said something, was an important contributor to the early numbers of *Blackwood*. But unquestionably the most important man of letters and the best critic on the staff was JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART, who, in the early days of the magazine, was a very young man, and had before him a long and varied career of journalism. He was the son of an Established Church minister at Cambusnethan, and, after entering Glasgow University very early, went up to Balliol College, Oxford, and came down, when he was only just nineteen, with a first-class. From Oxford he went to finish his education in Germany, and soon after began to translate Schlegel's *Lectures on History* for Blackwood. He was called to the Scots bar, but devoted himself to literature, and, after some fugitive contributions to *Blackwood*, appeared as the author of *Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk* (1819), a humorous picture of Edinburgh society, which, in its title, parodied Scott's *Paul's Letters from the Continent*, and, in its matter, was clearly suggested by *Humphrey Clinker*. In 1820 he married Scott's elder daughter Sophia, and occupied a house called Chiefswood, which lay within the Abbotsford domain ; and, from 1821 to 1824, bitten with the desire of imitating his great father-in-law, he published four novels in annual succession, *Valerius*, *Adam Blair*, *Reginald Dalton*, and *Matthew Wald*—each an experiment in a new theme, and at least one of them—*Adam Blair*—giving proof of more than ordinary capacity. In 1823 he published his famous and excellent *Spanish Ballads*. Then, when he was little more than thirty-one, he was appointed Gifford's successor in the editorship of the *Quarterly*, and left Scotland for London. This was in 1825 ; and he remained at his post till 1853. The chief work of his later life was the great *Life of Scott* (1836–38), in addition to which he published a *Life of Burns* (1828) and a very clever abstract of his father-in-law's *Life of Napoleon* (1829). His wife died during the publication of the *Life of Scott*. In 1843 he was appointed Auditor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and died at Abbotsford in the early winter of 1854. A great man, an excellent writer, and a most accomplished scholar, it is in one sense rather unfortunate that the *Life of*

JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART (1794–1854).

Scott should be his chief legacy to posterity. It is the one book which can with any reason be compared to Boswell; for, like Boswell, Lockhart was content to merge his far more worthy individuality in that of his no less worthy hero. On the other hand, it gives us the advantage of a very amiable impression of its author which our acquaintance with his criticism must partly dispel. It will never be known how much he wrote for the periodicals with which he was connected, nor how many of the articles that have stood in the way of early talent are due to his pen. He continued the *Quarterly* on the lines laid down by Gifford, treating new authors with something more than asperity. It is just probable that he had written the *Blackwood* article on Keats, the fiercest of all the attacks on the Cockney school; and the almost certain fact that, later on, he was the author of a bitter criticism of Tennyson in the *Quarterly*, might prove him guilty of the error. It was also during his editorship that the great review made its wholesale and undiscriminating assault on *Jane Eyre*. For these and other sins Lockhart was doubtless more or less responsible; but this ill-tempered suspicion of young writers and their extravagances did no harm in the end, and was actually of service in correcting uncritical enthusiasm. Much journalism is purely ephemeral, and Lockhart's articles have gone the way of the rest; but he certainly stands among the greatest of those nineteenth-century critics whose training and literary education have been Scottish.

Lockhart as biographer and critic.

§ 5. The "Cockney school," which had been so uncharitably assailed by the superior young critics and satirists of *Blackwood*, was represented by *The London Magazine*, which was born in 1820. It was published by Taylor and Hessey, and edited by John Scott, who quarrelled with Lockhart and fell in a duel with his adversary's champion, Christie. The greatest man whom the *London* introduced to literature was CHARLES LAMB, then a man of forty-five and a clerk in the India House. Lamb's father had been a lawyer's clerk in the Temple, but he himself had received a sound education at Christ's Hospital and, from early youth, had devoted himself to the study of Elizabethan literature in its widest sense. This enthusiasm for forgotten writers, mingled with the magic influence of his schoolfellow, Coleridge, helped to form Lamb's cast of mind and his closely allied style. The circumstances of his life, which might have been peaceful and happy, took a tragic complexion while he was still young. A vein of insanity, from which he was not exempt, ran through all his family and declared itself especially in his elder sister, Mary. In one of her paroxysms she killed her mother with a knife from the dinner-table; and from that time her brother took her under his protection, nursing her with the most extraordinary tenderness, and finding her, in her saner moments, a sympathetic

"The London Magazine." CHARLES LAMB (1775–1834).

companion. This constant attention to his sister is the entire story of Lamb's life. His tendency to indulge in drink, which grew upon him during his later years, has been much exaggerated. There was doubtless much sorrow in his private life from which he sought relief. When he began to write for the *London*, he already had written a play called *John Woodvil* (1802), in imitation of his favourite dramatists, and had collaborated with his sister in the *Tales from Shakespeare* (1807), which are a classic in their kind. As it is, the body of his work, contained in the *Essays of Elia* and occasional essays on literary subjects, is far less in size than in importance. For "Elia" is, without dispute, the greatest journalist of his period—exceptional as the writer of journalism every word of which is immortal. He has two aspects, as humorist and critic. In the first of these, he is the author of the *Essays of Elia* and the occasional articles which supplement them. These essays are simply *causeries* on some topic which happened to interest him for the moment, full of minute observation and compounded at one and the same time of worldly wisdom and child-like ingenuousness. Their tone is intimate and personal: we learn to know their author as we know Montaigne. The web of his imagination is shot with reminiscence, and the man appears in his lovable and pathetic self behind his fantasies. His abnormally keen sense of humour, which is the dominant note of his charming letters and the records of his conversation, was, as might be expected, very nearly akin to pathos. Romantic to the backbone, he was not, however, a sentimentalist in the common acceptation of the term. The tear which trembled on the eyelid of his every jest was never the result of maudlin sensibility. Everything that from time to time had given him happiness he reproduced with an entire recollection of his pleasure, tinged with the sadness of the irrevocable past. It is this simplicity and tenderness of heart, this genius for treasuring up happy impressions and illuminating their memory with the rainbow-colours of smiles and tears, that has made Lamb so great a favourite with hosts of readers, critical or otherwise. It was, moreover, his good fortune to have borrowed from his favourite writers a method of expression which gave him a style inimitable in its very straightforwardness. It may be possible to catch his tone of innocent garrulity, but its peculiar accent is beyond the farthest reach. Lamb's prose, in fact, is the finest example of a literary style which is so studiously cultivated and refined that it appears perfectly natural. Each essay is an intimate conversation, eschewing any attempt at high and eloquent writing, putting us on equal terms with the author, and avoiding the suspicion of pedantry. But, as we look more closely into it, we see how carefully every phrase is turned, how manifold and artful are the changes of literary expression, and how quaintly the whole is enriched by little mannerisms and ornaments of the Jacobean and Caroline

Lamb's humour.

His style.

periods. In copiousness and in skilful employment of vocabulary, Lamb is unsurpassed.

But, to value him aright, the *Essays of Elia* should be compared with his critical work. He wrote a certain number of essays, none of great length, but all packed with pregnant sentences and expressions of opinion which may be regarded, for the most part, as final judgments. No one could have been less authoritative in manner than Lamb: he put forward his views with the modesty of an individual student. The great value of his terse criticisms lies in the fact that they are not passing judgments on his contemporaries, but are concerned with dead authors. Lamb is certainly the chief example of that enthusiasm for the lesser dramatists which was so remarkable at the beginning of the century, and animated even Gifford. In his *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets* (1808) he collected an anthology from all the forgotten or less famous poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, from Sackville to the Tribe of Ben, adding short notes here and there at the foot of certain scenes. His collection may be charged with one or two omissions, but it forms a well-nigh perfect handbook to the great age of English drama. The notes are short and are so few that they might fill a very small pamphlet; but each of them is marked by the careful simplicity of style and the recurrence of memorable phrase which is found in the *Essays of Elia*. Every student of the drama has these paragraphs at his fingers' ends, and there are perhaps no passages in English which, on the mere ground of style, are so worthy of being committed to memory. The same perfection and finality of form, the same fertility of matter, strike us wherever we turn in Lamb's work; but they are nowhere so obvious as in these little criticisms, expressed in the tone of a casual letter-writer, yet with so rare and full an intelligence alike of criticism and of homely expression. Lamb was all his life a lover of London, and, with the exception of Keats, was the most interesting personality of the "Cockney school"; and his cockney accent, like Keats', has a more pleasant and musical sound to our ears than that of the supercilious and often pedantic contemporaries who mocked at it. The *Essays of Elia* were collected in 1823, and, ten years later (1833), were supplemented by a volume of *Last Essays*.

Lamb as critic.

§ 6. WILLIAM HAZLITT, three years Lamb's junior, was also a critic and essayist. His life, like that of the "Cockney writers generally, was not altogether happy. His father was a Unitarian minister, and designed him for the same calling; but the influence of Coleridge, whom he met early in life at the Shropshire town of Wem, altered his opinions, and he embarked on journalism. He married a Miss Stoddart, whose family was friendly with Lamb, and made his home with her at Winterslow on Salisbury Plain. Some years later he procured a divorce, and, later on,

WILLIAM HAZLITT (1778–1830).

married a second time, and no less unhappily. His misfortunes were due to an exacting and intolerant temper, which is evident in most of his critical work, leading him into strange paradoxes and crabbed judgments. Towards the end of his life he undertook a *Life of Napoleon* (1828–30), which he intended to be an answer from the Liberal side to Scott's similar work. It was more laborious and exhaustive than interesting, and failed in its aim. His criticism, however, especially that part dealing with the Elizabethan writers, and his occasional essays, are well worth the study, and writers are not wanting to-day who declare that he was the best critic of the century. He had nothing of Lamb's individuality or striking beauty of style, but employed his words simply as a useful medium of criticism. Yet he was not without skill in his harmony ; nor, unless he was provoked to ill-temper, did he waste many words over his subject. He is a critic who must be read closely and with unusual attention, the master of a science whose key he does not give to everyone ; an authority, not merely on literature, but on art also, and one of the most original writers of the early part of the century.

The nominal head of the Cockney school, a charming writer in prose and poetry, and yet the least of the band, was JAMES HENRY LEIGH HUNT. He was the son of a West Indian who, living in the United States, found himself a loyalist in the middle of rebels, and, after the Declaration of Independence, came over to England. His son was born at Southgate in Middlesex, and was sent to Christ's Hospital, which he left "in the same rank, at the same age, and for the same reasons as Lamb." He stammered, and therefore "Grecian I could not be." In 1805 he began to contribute theatrical criticisms to his brother's paper, *The News*, and in 1808 the brothers became editors of *The Examiner*. In 1812 he was imprisoned for libelling the Prince Regent, and this confinement seems to have been the happiest portion of his life. Soon after coming out of prison he published *The Story of Rimini* (1816), an Italian tale in verse, which contains some exquisite poetry and had a strong influence on the style of Keats. *The Indicator*, an imitation of *The Spectator*, was Hunt's next periodical venture (1819) ; but in 1822 he sailed, with his family, for Italy, where he started the brilliant but short-lived *Liberal* with Byron and Shelley. Hunt was a shiftless, unpractical person, and the account of his life with Byron, on whom he descended with a young and unruly family, is enough to prove that Dickens, although he denied the imputation, did not draw the character of Harold Skimpole without some reference to him. Shelley's death removed the pacific element from a connection which irritated Byron, and, a little before Byron's departure for Greece, the Hunts separated from him on bad terms. On his return to England Hunt published an ungenerous little book called *Lord Byron and some of his Contemporaries* (1828), which was universally condemned. He continued to write for

LEIGH HUNT (1784–1859).

periodicals, and from time to time published various poems. At the end of a long and impecunious life he enjoyed a Crown pension of £200 a year. He died at the age of seventy-five. One may safely say that his fame is founded more justly on his connection with the great celebrities of his day, and on the prominence of his name in contemporary biography, than on his own work. Nevertheless, for a certain gracefulness he is unsurpassed. Without strong emotion, he had a genius for witty and sprightly verse; and his prose, slight and miscellaneous, contains some of the most charming occasional writing in the language. His most solid contribution to criticism was his famous preface (1840) to Moxon's edition of Wycherley, Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar, which formed the subject of Macaulay's scathing essay on Restoration comedy. Most of Hunt's prose work is collected from his journals. His books of essays, *A Jar of Honey from Mount Hybla* (1848) and *The Old Court Suburb* (1855), are full of wit and fancy; and, beside these, he wrote a by no means first-rate novel, *Sir Ralph Esher* (1832). His charming and famous *Autobiography* appeared in 1850.

§ 7. We now come to the work of two men who, with no regular pretence to criticism, were both excellent scholars and, first and foremost, deliberate artists in prose.

Thomas de Quincey (1785–1859).

Thomas de Quincey, who was a year younger than, and died in the same year with Leigh Hunt, was, curiously enough, a journalist all his life long, and is rather singular in his transference of allegiance from the Liberal *London Magazine* to the Tory *Blackwood*. De Quincey was a younger son of a Manchester merchant, and went to Manchester Grammar School. His copious autobiographic sketches, including the *Confessions*, contain a vivid but not altogether historical account of his early life. He ran away from school when he was seventeen, and wandered for a year between North Wales and London. In 1803 he went up to Worcester College, Oxford, and made Oxford his nominal home until his removal to the Lakes in 1809. During this period he did very little regular work, but read German, began to take opium freely, and astonished his acquaintance by his apparent omniscience. His home in the Lakes was at Grasmere, in Wordsworth's old cottage of Town-end. He had been attracted there by the fascination of Coleridge, to whom he already had sent money anonymously; and in his turn he attracted the literary society of Grasmere to him. However, his later *Recollections of the Lake Poets* are a vulgar and untrustworthy reminiscence of these days of early enthusiasm, while his essay on Coleridge's opium-eating is a miracle of the bad taste from which he was never free. In 1816 he married, and, in 1819, finding himself on the brink of poverty, began to edit *The Westmorland Gazette*. From 1821 to 1824 he was in London, working for *The London Magazine*; but in 1826 he began to

write for *Blackwood*, and in 1828 removed to Edinburgh, and lived there and in the secluded village of Lasswade till his death in 1859, contributing to *Blackwood* and other Edinburgh periodicals, and maturing schemes for great books which came to nothing.

A novel called *Klosterheim* (1839), which never would have made a stir by itself, and *The Logic of Political Economy* (1844) are the only two books in which De Quincey went beyond the limits of the magazine article. The *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* (1821) is simply a collection of journalistic essays which, by virtue of their magnificence of style, attain to a great position in literature. The rest of his work has the same qualification on a smaller scale. Such journalism as this has never been seen. "Christopher North," indeed, was filling *Blackwood* with romantic and florid rhapsody; but his friend was a far greater master than he of the same kind of prose. From first to last De Quincey rivets our attention, not by his matter, which is interesting enough, but by his style. A gorgeous and unlimited vocabulary and an almost extravagant sense of harmonious sound mark every sentence of his work, whether it means much or little. Although he had a pre-eminent gift of narrative, as every reader of the essay on Bentley or the appendix to *Murder as one of the Fine Arts* cannot but acknowledge, he had with it a fatal gift of prolixity and digression, of interweaving sentences and crowding together synonymous and parallel terms and phrases with an irritating frequency. As a compensation for this he had no small sense of humour, and the faculty which enabled him to write easily and lightly helped him in his more tragic moods; but just as, in his more solemn moments, his humour is apt to become intolerably grotesque, so, in his hours of playfulness, it assumes a disagreeable and puerile skittishness. This hollowness of tone, with its unreal and strained facetiousness, is one of the chief drawbacks in De Quincey's work and quite precludes him from consideration as a humorist. It was not uncommon in his day, but no one showed it so palpably as this brilliant essayist, whose verbosity and splendid involution of style made his frequent descents into triviality all the more ungainly. The flippancy of *The Spanish Military Nun* is the worst eccentricity of the humour that, in the *Murder* essay, might have produced a typical masterpiece, but merely succeeded in making an exception—not without blemishes—to prove the rule. The second fault of De Quincey's taste lies at the opposite extreme. It cannot be denied that his continual stream of sweetness is somewhat cloying, or at least monotonous. The *Confessions* may be read with pleasure, and this high epic prose, with its lyric outbursts and constant redundancy of epithets may suit a subject like *The Flight of the Kalmucks*; but, when it is applied to any and every subject, it cannot but pall. It is

His essays: their peculiar style and its faults.

usually agreed that De Quincey's love of opium had something to do both with his occasional poverty of humour and with his invariable and indiscriminate grandiloquence, as well as with the half-finished and fragmentary state in which much of his writing seems to be left. And, as a matter of fact, where he achieves distinction is neither as a humorist nor as a critic—although his occasional criticism was often admirable—nor even as a narrator, but as a writer of fantastic prose, a translator of wild and disconnected dreams into lyric English. The dreaminess of manner which he had copied from the German transcendentalists was intensified by his temperament and habits, and acted on his style. His prose at its best and most imaginative is more closely related to poetic dream-fancies like *Kubla Khan* than to any other thing. The *Confessions* are full of such passages. As a deliberate change from fact to the most glowing fancy there is nothing finer than the peroration of the essay on *Joan of Arc*. Such instances are common enough in this extraordinary body of work, from which so much can be selected and so much might be left out. But to those readers who seek in De Quincey, before everything else, a singular combination of harmonies and the alliance of prose with music and poetry, the most unadulterated pleasure exists in the *Suspiria de Profundis*, with its magnificent fragments of *Levana and our Ladies of Sorrow* and *Savannah-la-Mar*; and in *The English Mail-Coach*, the essay through which flows the volume of a disturbed dream. In these chapters of his work the full influence of De Quincey's style is felt. It seems to compass the scale of musical prose; we hear and see in its cadences, alternately terrible and peaceful, "the sobbing of litanies, the thundering of organs, and the mustering of summer clouds." If Lamb's prose captures us with its restrained and artful simplicity, De Quincey, at these moments, using the utmost resources of florid diction, obtains an equal mastery.

His merits as a fantastic writer.

§ 8. The life of WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR, whose prose presents such a contrast to De Quincey's, was the life of an unfortunate and not always agreeable eccentric. His father, a member of an old and wealthy family, was a physician in practice at Warwick, where his son was born. The boy was sent to Rugby, from which he had to be removed, and to Trinity College, Oxford, where he was rusticated. His fault in both cases was his unrestrained temper, which dogged him through life and caused his future misfortunes. The net result of his education was the improvement of his singular gift for writing Latin verse, in which he excelled all his life. When he came down from Oxford without a degree his father offered him a choice of professions; but he chose to quarrel with his family and go to London in search of literary work. In 1795 appeared his first volume of *Poems*, and, three years later, when he was partially

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR (1775–1864).

reconciled to his father and had retired to South Wales on an allowance, he published *Gebir* (1798). This noble and chaotic narrative in Miltonic blank verse was not an immediate source of profit; nor did the *Poems* of 1802–6, including a translation of *Gebir* into Latin verse, win their author a great reputation. But his father died in 1805, and he, finding himself the inheritor of a large fortune, went to Bath and played the man of fashion to admiration. A strong republicanism of temperament, which burned in him till his death and led him into a quixotic defence of tyrannicide, impelled him to take part as a volunteer in the Spanish rising of 1808. On returning he made up his mind to become a country gentleman, and purchased the estate of Llanthony Abbey, in an out-of-the-way valley of South Wales. In 1812 he published his great tragedy, *Count Julian*, having married, in 1811, a Miss Julia Thuillier, whom he met and won at a dance in Bath. Neither Llanthony nor Miss Thuillier were successful investments. Landor embroiled himself with all his Welsh neighbours, and, in 1814, quarrelled bitterly with his wife. He immediately left England for the Continent; Mrs. Landor sought a reconciliation and followed him, and they lived in Italy till 1835, not always on the best of terms. During this term of foreign residence Landor produced his greatest work. The *Imaginary Conversations of Literary Men and Statesmen* (1824–9) is certainly among the greatest monuments of English prose. It was supplemented by the *Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare* (1834), *Pericles and Aspasia* (1836), the *Pentameron* (1837), an additional series of *Imaginary Conversations* (1846), and *Greeks and Romans* (1853). Meanwhile, he was writing small lyrics of the first order and much Latin verse. In 1835 a second quarrel with his wife drove him back to England, and from 1838 to 1857 he lived at Bath. Unhappily, in his eighty-second year, his violent temper was stronger than ever; and a serious quarrel with a Bath lady led to the injudicious publication of a disgraceful lampoon and an action for libel, in which he was worsted with heavy damages. He left England for Florence, where he lived on the worst terms with his own family. The Brownings, however, took pity on him, and watched over the end of his life. He died at Florence in the eighty-ninth year of his age.

Landor's eccentricities.

It has been well said of Landor that no writer presents "as remarkable an instance of the strength and weakness of the human understanding." His tastes were refined, his culture was exceptional, and all his work is distinguished by learning and polish. His great powers, however, were marred by the heedlessness and rashness of his disposition, the strength of his passions, and the uncontrollable obstinacy of his will. He had no thought for the feelings of others; his opinion, even when expressed in paradox and unfounded assertion, must be received because it is his.

The unhappy inconsistency and wilfulness which declared Napoleon to be a man of no genius, Alfieri the greatest man that Europe has ever seen, Pitt a poor creature, and Fox a charlatan, prevented his writings from obtaining their due position and led to a general misunderstanding of his individuality. After the lapse of years, however, that individuality has taken shape, and it is now impossible to deny its claim to a high, if exceptional, place in literature. While he stands apart from all his contemporaries of the romantic movement, he is a monumental example of the republican mind in letters. His intellect was stirred by the great writers of the Roman Republic, and the fascination which they exercised upon him was stimulated by the French Revolution. Thus his style, severely classical as it is, is filled with the influence of the modern spirit and bears no relation to the reactionary and second-hand classicism of the eighteenth century. Roughly speaking, he has no kindred in English literature, unless we take his early Miltonism into account; he derives his inspiration directly from the Romans. His prose and his poetry alike bear this hall-mark of classical distinction. In this respect he is precisely the opposite of De Quincey, whose work is absolutely redundant with Gothic elaboration. Landor, always on the heights, treading among his great *dramatis personæ* with the foot of an equal, never condescending to triviality, is to many readers heavy and unattractive. He had no sense of humour, and the absence of relief thus caused may very well convey a generally false impression. But the *Imaginary Conversations* indicate a dramatic power which is not so evident in the tragedy of *Count Julian*, and dialogues like that between Peter the Great and Alexis or Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn—two examples out of many—sound the very depths of tragic terror and pathos, every clear-cut and designedly unadorned sentence adding to the effect. The student of Landor will almost certainly find discrimination difficult amid work of such perfect craftmanship. The man who, in eight lines of simple verse, could attain the faultlessness of *Rose Aylmer* was not likely to write much that can be easily set aside as imperfect. Landor wrote for his own pleasure and with an enthusiasm for his medium, whether Latin or English; and, as a result, we have in him an illustrious master of style—one of the most illustrious of the century. And, if we consider the vast sweep of scholarship which the *Conversations* exhibit, the enormous variety of topics discussed with such masterly force and care, the great throng of men and women, statesmen, soldiers, philosophers, poets, queens, who live and move in their pages, the grace and beauty of their delineation of human character and of external nature, and their faultlessly statuesque English prose, we shall feel that after all there is hardly an exaggeration of truth in the magnificent arrogance

Classical form of his writing: his scholarship and range of subject.

of Landor's words, "What I write is not written on slate, and no finger, not of Time herself, who dips it in the cloud of years, can efface it." He foresaw his unpopularity but was not disconcerted: "I shall dine late; but the dining-room will be well-lighted, the guests few and select." Few boasts have equal justification.

§ 9. The multitude of periodicals which followed the earliest outburst of journalism is innumerable. Of all these the most brilliant and audacious was *Fraser's Magazine*, which was started in the early thirties under the general supervision of William Maginn, a former contributor to *Blackwood*. The most conspicuous member of the staff, which included celebrities old and young, was perhaps Thackeray; much of his best miscellaneous work appeared in the columns of *Fraser*. But the most interesting of its enterprises was its admission (1833) of a very original serial work by THOMAS CARLYLE.

THOMAS CARLYLE (1795–1881).

Carlyle, who thus sprang into a doubtful fame, was the son of James Carlyle, a mason at Ecclefechan in Dumfriesshire; and many of his singularities may be traced to his early surroundings. Like his own Ziethen, he was "a rugged son of the moorlands, nourished, body and soul, on frugal oatmeal, with a large sprinkling of fire and iron thrown in." His boyhood showed signs of ability, and his father, a man of sterling worth who commanded his family's reverence, determined to give him a good education. At Annan School and Edinburgh University he gathered in a strange harvest of miscellaneous knowledge. However, for twenty years after leaving college, he lived a very unsettled life, his fixed dislike for rules and formulas preventing him from embracing any profession. His father wanted him to become a Presbyterian minister, but he refused, and tried teaching at Annan and Kirkcaldy. This was succeeded by private tutoring: for some time he was tutor to the future politician Charles Buller. Meanwhile he was doing good journeyman-work in literature, translating Legendre's *Geometry* from the French, contributing biographical notices to *The Edinburgh Encyclopædia*, and writing scraps of verse and papers for various magazines. It was long before he found the one thing which he thought essential to earthly happiness, a life's work. For much of this time his prospects looked very dreary; disappointment and despondency clouded his spirit; his temper became irritable and capricious. Happily, his heart remained strong and sound throughout, and his persevering industry led him at last into that career of creative activity which he pursued with the greatest success. Three important accidents befell him in these years. He was attracted to German literature, and so laid the foundation of his literary style and much of his thought; he gained a lasting friend in Edward Irving, the great pulpit orator and founder of the "Catholic Apostolic" sect; and in 1826 he married Miss Jane Baillie Welsh of

Haddington, whose bright wit and graceful manners cheered his path and tempered his asperities for forty years.

His first considerable literary effort was a translation (1824) of the *Wilhelm Meister* of his favourite Goethe, whose merits he never tired of preaching through life. This was followed in 1825 by the *Life of Schiller*, which had appeared as a series of articles in *The London Magazine* and showed no unusual peculiarities of style, and in 1827 by the *Specimens of German Romance*. Carlyle by this time had made Jeffrey's acquaintance, and began to write for *The Edinburgh Review*. His early style was certainly constructed on the *Edinburgh* model, but he gradually drifted into the strangest eccentricities, which made his work repellent to his contemporaries. His *Edinburgh* articles, many of them on German subjects, took a more and more obvious individuality of form, until they seriously distressed Jeffrey's academic mind. For more than seventeen years he wrote reviews and critical essays, extending, as time went on, his interest from an exclusive devotion to German, to French and English subjects. The volumes, published long afterwards, of *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays*, contain, in a number of articles and reviews, a continuous record of the greater literary designs in which he was engaged from time to time.

Beginning of literary work.

He had made his home in 1828 at his wife's farm of Craigenputtock. It was from the solitude of Nithsdale that his voice was heard for the first time in its characteristic note. *Sartor Resartus*, written for publication as a book and refused by more than one publisher, found a precarious home as a serial in *Fraser*, and awakened the admiration of a very small minority. Its style resembling, as Mr. George Meredith has said, "either early architecture or utter dilapidation," gave ground for much hostility, and Englishmen were slow to recognise its real merit. The first glance of recognition and encouragement that fell on Carlyle came from America, where *Sartor Resartus* first appeared in book form (1835). It was not published separately in England till 1838.

"Sartor Resartus" (1833).

Carlyle's life at Craigenputtock had determined his real vocation. In 1834 he left Scotland, came up to London, and fixed his abode at 5 (now 24) Cheyne Row, Chelsea, where he was to live and work for well-nigh half a century. Struggle was not yet over, but he pinned his "desperate hope," as he called it, on *The French Revolution* (1837), on which for three years he lavished his whole wealth of brain and heart, vigilance and energy. The publication was delayed by a terrible mishap: through an unhappy oversight on the part of John Stuart Mill, to whom Carlyle had lent the MS. of the first volume, the precious document was burned and had to be re-written entirely from memory. *The French Revolution* defined Carlyle's position, not only as an unconventional and picturesque historian, but as a prophet

"The French Revolution" (1837).

and teacher, applying the moral of past events to the present and giving his narrative the complexion of a sermon. The tone of the book was no doubt unwelcome to many, but its vivid presentation of an epoch which never had been so thoroughly described and realised, the life and individual characteristics which it gave to bygone scenes and men, were sufficient guarantee for its success. From that time Carlyle's eccentricities were forgiven by sensible and unbiased persons, and his work was regarded as a new glory of English letters. *The French Revolution* was followed by a serious addiction to social and political questions. The *Chartism* pamphlet of 1839 was a pessimistic criticism of the state of England, in striking contrast to the views of any political party, inveighing with force and fire against the courses then followed by statesmen, and propounding the Carlylean remedy for the evils of the time. In 1841 a series of lectures on the character and influence of great men, which had been delivered in London during the previous year, was published under the title of *Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History*. This, one of the most stimulating books of the century, whose very unorthodoxy and occasional impracticability have a distinctive nobleness of their own, embodies most of the splendid paradoxes which he consistently supported till his death, and is perhaps the book above all others which has made his influence a living thing with all classes of readers. His next book, *Past and Present* (1843), was a brilliant contrast between life in the twelfth century, whose picture he drew from the chronicle of Bury St. Edmunds, and society as he saw it—an eloquent and indignant denunciation of the leading men of his age and the age itself.

"Chartism" (1839), etc.

From the roll of heroes whom his lectures had glorified he was attracted to one by natural affinity and chose him for special treatment. After some years' hard study on a confused heap of materials, he brought out *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches: with Elucidations* (1845). Nothing which he wrote is a better proof of his business-like attitude to history, and his own part of the narrative is always picturesque and illuminating; but, while his book contributed to a fairer general estimate of his hero, its constant tone of apotheosis was only too characteristic of his dealings towards memories which he delighted to honour, bracketing their virtues and vices within the limits of the same praise and parading them with a confidence little short of effrontery. During the period between 1840 and 1850, of which *Cromwell* is the central point, Carlyle became more and more antagonistic to the general movement of his age: its aspirations, opinions, conventional forms of thought, its principles, pursuits, schemes—in fact, everything about it—filled him with scorn until he saw round him nothing but a general hollowness, dishonesty, and

"Oliver Cromwell" (1845).

Carlyle's attacks on contemporary life.

love of shams. At length, finding his rage uncontrollable, he delivered his soul in an *Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question* (1849), and, this preliminary completed, made, as Matthew Arnold put it, "a furious raid into the field of political practice" with the *Latter-Day Pamphlets* (1850), in which, for eight successive months, he arraigned furiously and with a brilliant employment of satire, now fierce and unsparing, now melancholy and solemn, the whole character and conduct of his time. The same note is heard without its harshness in the *Life of John Sterling* (1851), a tribute to the memory of the dear friend of his riper years, the shining figure in the intellectual society of London, "whose history," he tells us, was, "beyond others, emblematic of his time."

Carlyle's career as a writer practically ended in the field in which it had begun : the history of a German king concluded the work which had been inaugurated by the translation of a German book. From his condemnation of society in *Latter-Day Pamphlets* he turned to the valiant undertaking of doing for Frederick the Great's memory the service which he had rendered to Cromwell's. For a whole decade and more he toiled painfully at a picture of his hero which should be favourable without unfaithfulness to fact. Two volumes, including the crowded abstract of Hohenzollern history which, on the threshold of the work, proves a stumbling-block to many, appeared in 1858, a third in 1862, the fourth in 1864, and the fifth and sixth in 1865. In his primary aim Carlyle cannot be said to have succeeded. The process which he had employed with Cromwell's character was in the interests of justice and had affected popular opinion. With Frederick deliberate whitewashing was required, and no sooner was it completed than the surface broke out again into patches which could not be concealed. Individuals may have been converted to Carlyle's hero ; public sentiment suffered no change. With regard to the historical value and literary virtue of the work criticism has remained a little lukewarm. In a book of such magnitude, written with an unusual purpose and on an unconventional plan, there are bound to be great faults ; and Carlyle, in his passionate desire of giving relief to his main figure, made out of his general history something phantasmagoric and not a little unreal. No splendid pieces of writing, like passage after passage of *The French Revolution*, where fact and imagination are ideally wedded, occur in *Frederick*. This fantastic masterpiece of special pleading takes a practical and matter-of-fact view of its material, plodding from one chapter to another and encountering necessary digressions, with no abnormal enthusiasm for picturesque effect. In spite of this, the patient reader finds a living light, as of the sun just past its meridian, cast upon the memoirs and letters which accumulated round Frederick and his contemporaries, and treads the dreary and half-forgotten battlefields of Saxony with a new interest.

"Frederick the Great" (1858–65).

The chief drawback of these volumes is their abuse of Carlylesque mannerism : they read, not like *Sartor Resartus*, but like distant and affected imitations of its distracting grotesqueness. Authors whose style is the result of artificial formation are apt to fall into this snare ; and Carlyle, although he clothed his thoughts in a very suitable and appropriate dress which was the natural outcome of his crabbed and peculiar character, did not escape the risk. Nor can it be said, finally, that Carlyle's portrait of Frederick was altogether clear : the utter contradiction between his devotion to truth and the purpose which he had undertaken blurred the picture ; and, amid the chaos of material which surrounds it, the central figure is anything but decisively apparent.

Later life and work.

The sixteen years of life which yet remained to Carlyle were not without event. In 1865 his University chose him as Lord Rector. His address at his installation, containing an abstract of the teaching which had been at the root of all his work, lifted him to the apex of his popularity : he was now recognised by all as a great teacher whose voice had been disregarded too long. A few weeks later, Mrs. Carlyle died suddenly while driving in Hyde Park, and with her his joy in life was extinguished. The posthumous publication of his *Reminiscences* (1881), combined with the influence of Froude's unfortunate life of his friend, produced a mistaken impression as to the relations of Carlyle to his wife. The fact seems to have been that the pair were well matched, and that, in spite of Carlyle's irritability of temper, the faults of the union were not all on his side ; but his love for her drove him into passionate remorse and self-accusation for imagined unkindness and neglect. He was, at her death, an old man past the ordinary limit of life, and wrote very little more. In *Shooting Niagara ; and After ?* an open letter whose occasion was the Reform Bill of 1867, he once more played the part of Cassandra with little perceptible decay of power. He occupied the greater part of his time in writing his reminiscences and in preparing and annotating his wife's letters for publication : and not till 1875 did he publish anything fresh. This time he occupied himself with an essay, published in *Fraser's Magazine*, on *The Portraits of John Knox* and a vivacious little history of *The Early Kings of Norway*, which had been in MS. for many years. To the last he showed a keen sarcastic interest in contemporary affairs, "raying out," like Mirabeau's father, "curious observations on life" which were signally free from flattery. His judgments on public men were generally harsh, often unjust : long as he had lived, he had not learned the duty of justice to his contemporaries. The burden of the world's mystery weighed heavily upon his spirits : age, while changing many, even the most apparently radical, of his opinions, did not mellow his nature—his biting tongue and crabbed temper never left him. He died at Chelsea on the 4th of February, 1881, of mere

physical decay. The *Reminiscences*, which have prejudiced so many people against him, were published a few weeks later.

Carlyle's claim to be considered among historians is, of course, undeniable. *The French Revolution* alone would give him his proper rank in their body and justify the comparison with Macaulay which he naturally invites. But his position as an historian is entirely subordinate to his place as an active influence in English thought : while his purely creative, as distinct from his historical, genius gives him a more appropriate standing among writers of general prose than among specialists in history and philosophy. Before everything else, Carlyle was a man with a message. What the exact terms of a message delivered by a man notoriously disdainful of all formulas were it would be hard to say : nor could a complete shape be given to the Carlylean philosophy. But, roughly speaking, its main points, apprehended more early by a few, were seized by the many during the twenty years from 1850 to 1870. Moreover, there is very little doubt that, in a certain sense, Carlyle's doctrines, although from time to time obscured by the ephemeral success of some new prophet, have had the greatest practical influence of all which have distinguished the nineteenth century. The absolute sincerity with which he destroyed all pretence and pointed to the ideal of truth was enough to win him disciples. His mannerisms of style, tortured and frequently disagreeable, were not signs of a morbid or hysterical temperament : beneath them was an earnestness, an almost savage concentration on a single point, which permeated and freed them from unreality. The illustrious result of his teaching is seen in the work of Ruskin and J. A. Froude, to say nothing of others who have adopted his principles without falling into the error of imitating his style. It is true that his method of instruction is often difficult to follow, owing to his left-handed attitude towards his own ideals. His detestation of formulas led him into a religious paradox which is at first sight inexplicable : having the fear of God before his eyes, he nevertheless wrote much that seems irreverent and trivial. And, in reading him, we have to keep before our minds that contradiction which is always present between human ideals and practice, and the fatal truth that to avoid common formulas is simply to invent new ones. If this is remembered, Carlyle's work remains among the greatest of intellectual forces which have passed the bounds of literature and rooted themselves in the life of the nation.

Carlyle's influence on English thought.

§ 10. The death of JOHN RUSKIN, on January 20, 1900, removed from our midst the last great figure of an age which included Tennyson, Browning, and so many other names of the first order. The influence which this critic and philosopher, the master of a prose style eminently poetic in quality, exercised,

not merely over the literature, but over the whole life and thought of two generations, is not the least extraordinary phenomenon of the nineteenth century. He was born at 54 Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, on February 8, 1819. His father, a native of Edinburgh, was a wine merchant in London; he had married his first cousin, Margaret Cox, and John was their only son. The elder Ruskin was not only prosperous and wealthy; his taste for natural beauty and art was far in advance of that of his age, and thus the atmosphere of his home had the greatest influence on his son's future life. The boy was delicate: he received a desultory education from various tutors, and, just before matriculating at Oxford, attended lectures at King's College, London. Year after year he went on long driving tours with his father and mother through England and Wales and as far north as Perth. These expeditions developed in him that love of scenery and, more especially, that passion for mountains which in subsequent years inspired his best work. The view of the Surrey hills from his father's villa at Herne Hill first kindled this enthusiasm, which was quickened to its full height by a first sight of the Alps in 1833. Meanwhile, he was at liberty to pursue his private inclination for drawing and writing verse. His poems, published in 1850, and again (a complete collection) in 1891, are little more than intelligent and precocious rhymes, whose chief value is their indication, crude but none the less certain, of the line which his thought was about to take. His drawings, modelled at first under the influence of Prout, led him to the absorbing interest and occupation of his early manhood, the study of Turner, whose art he learned to imitate in a way that furnishes a most illuminating commentary on his master's methods.

JOHN RUSKIN (1819–1900). *Early life.*

Early in 1837 he went up to Christ Church, Oxford, as a gentleman-commoner. His promise was brilliant: in 1839 he won the Newdigate prize, and it was supposed that he would obtain high distinction in the schools. But his delicacy of health, aggravated by a disappointment in love, declared itself openly less than a year later. He had to leave Oxford and abandon his hope of taking Holy Orders. His parents were devoted to him: his mother had lived at Oxford while he was at Christ Church, in order to be near him and take charge of his health, and now they took him for a long tour on the Continent. On his return he read at home with a tutor and took a pass degree in 1842. A year later, in 1843, appeared the first volume of *Modern Painters*.

At Oxford.

Our space is too short to indicate the various lines of thought and interest which led up to this epoch-making volume. The Graduate of Oxford, as Ruskin called himself on the title-page, had been seen in print already. He had written in prose and poetry for various magazines and annuals since as far back as 1834. His new

"Modern Painters" (1843–1860).

book, however, was his first essay of importance, and brought him immediate fame. Originally he had intended its title to be *Turner and the Ancients*; this, however, he changed to the rather alarming but somewhat more lucid title of *Modern Painters*: "their Superiority in the Art of Landscape Painting to all the Ancient Masters proved by examples of the True, the Beautiful, and the Intellectual, from the Works of Modern Artists, especially from those of J. M. W. Turner, Esq., R.A." The aim of the work is sufficiently stated in these words. It was an elaborate philosophical defence of Turner against his critics, which was also an eloquent panegyric of the artist and a most searching criticism of all landscape art, English and foreign. Ruskin began by laying down general principles and applying them at length to works of art. The first and second volumes—the second appeared in 1846—kept closely to the philosophical plan, and were the beginning of a profound treatise on the whole theory of painting. Locke was the master whose system Ruskin kept in view; in the arrangement of his essay, and at first in its style, the influence of Locke is obvious. These two books were the work of a very young man, and there is much in their manner which is merely imitative. The style is uncertain and restive, and its most eloquent passages are in general founded, with a too great fluency, on earlier masters of prose, not of one period only, but of many. Nevertheless, their power and fire were infinitely beyond those of the mere copyist; and they awoke in their readers a corresponding enthusiasm: the thought which they contained was Ruskin's own, and was the herald of a new era in criticism. With his devotion to fact, Ruskin combined a fervent idealism; he wrote from the depth of strong religious conviction, with a stern Protestantism of tone. His theological ardour, indeed, left him as years passed; but the dogmatic manner which it engendered clung to him and was never so marked as in the notes and corrections which, years after, he added to his early books. To the end of his life, whatever he had to say, he was first and foremost preacher and prophet. When his style broke the bonds of imitation and assumed definite individuality, it never got rid of its debt to Holy Scripture; and, even to the least careful reader, its wonderful kinship to the style of the poetical and prophetic books of the Old Testament is its chief peculiarity and forms its evident inspiration.

The third and fourth volumes of *Modern Painters* were published, after an interval of ten years, in 1856. Turner had died in 1851, and in these volumes, as Ruskin said in his preface, it remained for the great artist's champion to write his epitaph. The way in which his plan had expanded itself is indicated by the general title of the third volume, "Of Many Things." With the growth of experience, too, his style had freed itself. It is a difficult thing to select special passages where almost every page is full of ringing and confident eloquence; and of none

of Ruskin's books is this more true than of the fourth volume, "Of Mountain Beauty." In writing of mountains, he could hardly fail to be at his best; and this part of his essay is a wonderful exhibition of his multiform knowledge and his just, if sometimes inaccurate, appreciation of every detail that could contribute to his general subject. Poetry, architecture, geology—these and many things more were brought to bear on the art of landscape, and led him into prolonged and fascinating digressions. The two concluding chapters of the mountain volume furnish a splendid peroration to all that goes before; the magnificent picturesqueness of the closing passage, in which he applied his lyrical imagination to the treatment of mountains in Scripture, is without a rival in the rest of his work. In part a piece of romantic description, in part a sermon whose every word is intended to carry a message with it, it is the crowning example of a style in which prose so entirely yields place to poetry that nothing of it is left save the outward form, and every sentence runs with a perfect rhythmic cadence. The fifth volume concluded the whole work in 1860. While it is in no sense inferior to its predecessors in substance and style, it represented, at the time of its publication, a belated addition to the defence of a theory which Ruskin already had established as beyond controversy. *Modern Painters* admitted of so wide a treatment that it might have been expanded indefinitely; but the time of its service was over, and what remained was treated hurriedly and crowded into as small a space as was possible.

In the meantime, Ruskin had confined himself by no means to the chivalrous assertion of Turner's superiority. The years between the first two and the last volumes of *Modern Painters* were years of manifold activity. In 1849, he published *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, in which his abilities as an æsthetic critic were illustrated as effectively as in *Modern Painters*. His theories of the connection between art and character, the strong morality which was the basis of all his writings, early or late, were founded on a thorough practical knowledge of his subject and not on mere guess-work. This new contribution to the literature of art was followed in 1851 by the first volume of *Stones of Venice*, that monumental history of a state in her greatness and decay through the medium of her architecture. The second and third volumes were published in 1853, and then Ruskin went back to *Modern Painters*. The architectural volumes were illustrated throughout in his own hand by a series of plates which showed a very perfect capacity for seizing the outward beauty, as well as the inner meaning of the buildings and details they represented. It was in these books that the brilliant "Graduate of Oxford" won his way to recognition as an authority on art and the undisputed master of a field of literature which he had opened out for himself. And, while he was writing and illustrating his books, he was working indefatig-

"The Seven Lamps" (1849), *and "Stones of Venice"* (1851–1853).

ably at the practical illustration of the theories which he vindicated. He became the champion and generous patron of the young school of English Pre-Raffaellite artists; with the aid of Mr. Lowes Dickinson and D. G. Rossetti, he taught drawing at Frederick Maurice's Working Men's College in Bloomsbury; he lectured in Edinburgh, London, Manchester, Cambridge, and other places; he busied himself in arranging the vast body of Turner's sketches for the National Gallery. These were merely the more important by-ways of his active and versatile life. Ready to spend his money lavishly and unselfishly, he was giving his country, on his own responsibility, the artistic education which it sorely needed; and, at the same time, he was impressing on it ideals of morality, public and private, which hitherto had been without a preacher.

§ 11. The natural bent of his artistic teaching led him, after 1860, into a wider field. His works on painting and architecture had been distinguished by a seriousness and moral earnestness which separated him at a long interval from the merely dilettante art critic. He was little disposed to take himself or his public lightly. His deep discontent with the commercialism of English life, and, with it, the influence of Carlyle's work and teaching, induced him to propose remedies of his own for this social disease. In the bitterness of spirit to which a gradual, but none the less complete, change of thought had brought him, he retired to Chamouni and wrote his first essay in political economy, *Unto this Last* (1862). These papers appeared in *Cornhill*, then under Thackeray's editorship, during the autumn of 1860; they were received with intense hostility and were soon dropped. But Ruskin did not abandon his attack on the existing principles of the science. His second plea for unselfishness and mutual co-operation between man and man was contained in the essays called *Munera Pulveris*, which Froude accepted for *Fraser's Magazine* in 1862. They were not published until ten years later. These were the beginning of that group of one-volume books, on all manner of subjects, but with ideals of social and individual righteousness as the main end in view, which, for the most part reprinted from lectures, formed the chief work of Ruskin's later life. The three chapters of *Sesame and Lilies* (1865), which, of all his works, has been perhaps the most widely read, were delivered to an audience at Manchester; the fourth, added in 1869, was given at Dublin. *Ethics of the Dust* (1866) contained the substance of certain informal talks to schoolgirls at Winnington in Cheshire. *The Crown of Wild Olive* (1866) included, in its plea for the recognition of Greek ideals of life, a lecture on War which Ruskin had given at Woolwich; and in 1869 *The Queen of the Air* suggested a further application of Greek principles to modern life. Meanwhile, in 1867, with his letters to Thomas Dixon, a Sunderland workman, Ruskin inaugurated the brilliant mis-

Economic writing after 1860.

cellany which his most ardent followers have accepted as the chief work of his life. *Time and Tide by Weare* (as he chose to spell it) *and Tyne* was the prelude to *Fors Clavigera*, those occasional letters, ninety-six in number, which appeared between 1871 and 1884. *Fors Clavigera*, whose mystic title is thoroughly in keeping with the ingenious names which Ruskin gave to all the books of this period, has a double importance. In the first place, it is the crowning example of his individual style as distinct from the elaborate and sometimes imitative manner which, in spite of a gradual assertion of his personality, had clung to all his earlier work. Secondly, it was the origin of the practical scheme to which henceforward he devoted himself—the Guild of St. George, with its ideals of mutual help and education, of the practical application of new principles to commercial problems, with its small library of useful books, its museum, provided by its founder's munificence, at Sheffield, and its model settlement at Barmouth.

"Fors Clavigera" (1871–1884).

By his election to the Slade Professorship of Fine Art at Oxford (1869), Ruskin's conquest of popular opinion was assured. He held his post for eight years; and, during that time, his chief published work, apart from *Fors*, consists in courses of Oxford lectures, bearing, through the medium of Italian and Greek art, on questions of life and character. *Ariadne Florentina* (1873) and *Val d'Arno* (1874) deserve special mention. It was at this time that he practically rediscovered the excellence of Botticelli, an Italian painter whose work had been forgotten in the fame of his great successors; while a fresh study of Venetian art brought him face to face with the striking merits of another half forgotten artist, Carpaccio. The occasional papers entitled *Mornings in Florence* (1875–7) and *St. Mark's Rest* (1877–84) contain the results of his mature study of Florentine and Venetian art, and say much that is worth comparing with his previous opinions on the same subjects. His tenure of his professorship was marked by an extraordinary activity; he was as munificent to his pupils and the University generally as he was to everything else that engaged his interest and attention; and he had the singular gift of conveying his own enthusiasm to those who were its witnesses. But in 1878 his health broke down, and, early in 1879, he resigned his chair and retired to Brantwood, his house on Coniston Lake, where he spent most of the remainder of his life. In 1883, he was recalled for a time to his professorship; but the recognition of vivisection by the University, in the endowment of a physiological laboratory, led to a second resignation and a final retirement. Little more of his work remains to be mentioned. *The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century* (1884)—a lecture entirely characteristic of the prophetic spirit of his closing years—his Oxford lectures on *The Pleasures of England* (1884–5), a collection of magazine

Oxford lectures and later volumes.

articles called *On the Old Road* (1885), and the charming autobiographical papers, *Præterita* (1885–9), were the last books which exhibited his old force of writing at its best. The final chapter of his life is one of rest and seclusion among the hills and lakes whose beauty and significance he had spent so much of his life in revealing. He is buried in the churchyard at Coniston. His life is a history of an intellect which underwent many and various changes of position. *Summary.* It is almost pathetic to notice how, in his search after truth, he constantly took standpoints which, for the time being, seemed to him impregnable, but eventually proved untenable—how, at the end of his life, when engaged in the revision of *Modern Painters* and *Stones of Venice*, he repudiated much that had gone to constitute the very foundation of their doctrine. His main enthusiasm was for truth in everything, at first for sincerity in taste and judgment, afterwards for uprightness in public and private life. His remedies for popular errors and national corruption were numerous; but, whatever his panacea for the moment happened to be, he was convinced of its specific virtue, and, what is more, he managed to infect others with his conviction. The frequently aggressive dogmatism of his eloquence, which must be a little irritating to all save his immediate followers, was the offspring of intense earnestness. While he strove for truth and righteousness, he himself, in all he said or did, was as consistent with his ideal as it is possible for man to be. And thus there is a distinct and firm bond connecting all his work, whatever may be its paradoxes and recantations of sentiment. As a teacher and as a moral influence, he enjoyed, during his lifetime, a signal triumph; his thought has permeated English life, and forms, at the present time, one of the most important elements in its constitution. As a man of letters, his position, so far as it is capable of definition, is founded upon his first books, whose celebrity lay at the root of all his subsequent influence. We have said that the individuality of his style was of slow growth; yet, from the very beginning, even where it was most imitative, it possessed a brilliancy and eloquence which were certainly all his own. And, of its less original aspect, this much may be said, that, while Ruskin no doubt adapted his diction to that of previous masters of English prose, the reproduction was, generally speaking, spontaneous and unconscious, and the uniformity of the mould in which the result was cast is, on its own merits, classical and free from indebtedness to earlier authority.

§ 12. Of the two contemporary apostles of culture, Matthew Arnold's influence, exercising itself solely with questions of conduct, cannot be said to have been very lasting. *Development of critical prose.* Ruskin, whose serious views on conduct and morality form no small part of his work, allied them to the concrete subject of art, and so provided material for an inexhaustible supply of critical literature dealing

for the most part with Italian painting. Two skilled artists in prose, each of whom has had his following, started from this common ground of interest. The elder and greater of these,

WALTER PATER (1839–1894).

WALTER HORATIO PATER, has had an astonishing and not very salutary influence on style, which is already showing signs of decay. His own work, however, has a peculiar excellence and charm. He was a Londoner by birth, but was educated at King's School, Canterbury, and at Queen's College, Oxford. He remained at Oxford for the rest of his life, holding a fellowship at Brasenose, and occupying himself with the formation of a careful and elaborate style, whose chief examples appeared at long intervals and principally towards the end of his life. His earliest book, the short and exquisite *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873), was the most illustrious product of the Ruskinian enthusiasm at Oxford. A masterpiece of a style prolific in purple patches, yet everywhere refined to an inconceivable softness and smoothness, it was also important from the point of view of its thought. The author was in debt to Ruskin, Arnold, Carlyle, and German æsthetic critics generally; but the brief outline of a new intellectual Hedonism, which he laid down in his epilogue to the book, was his own idea. There are two opinions as to his gorgeous style, which is always a little heavy and indigestible, but his philosophy and criticism of art and life excited the interest of all his readers. These were few, for his work was not without a tone of intellectual exclusiveness and arrogance, in this resembling Matthew Arnold's tone in *Culture and Anarchy*, although stating nothing aggressively or offensively. In artistic criticism Pater showed a wide divergence from Ruskinism, in his tendency to admire beauty for its own sake apart from moral considerations, and in a consequently wider catholicity of taste. This keen sense of beauty was visible to the end of his life, but his intellectual attitude underwent a gradual change until, embracing devoutly the principles of Anglicanism, his Epicureanism became strongly modified by his Christianity. This change is obvious in his second book, *Marius the Epicurean* (1885), published after an interval of twelve years—a kind of psychological novel of the days of Marcus Aurelius. The style of *Marius* is no lighter than that of its predecessor, but it shows a more uniform excellence and a less fervent impulsion to exotic outbursts of eloquence. This restrained quietism of manner was preserved, with certain lapses, in *Imaginary Portraits* (1887), a collection of four sketches in which Pater attempted to formulate, so far as he could, his philosophy of life, finding in his four heroes manifestations of its chief points. Strictly speaking, his style was never better nor more uniform than in the miscellaneous essays brought together as *Appreciations* (1889), including the famous papers on *Style* and *Sir Thomas Browne*, and three brief Shakespearean essays. The book,

however, full of weighty thoughts and sayings which are uttered with such compression that they are always difficult to remember exactly, will never command the admiration which *Marius* deserves; nor will its best passages become so widely known as the more florid beauties of the *Renaissance*. *Marius* is a masterpiece perfect in itself; the *Renaissance*, apart from anything else, is the most complete and suggestive picture of a great epoch which we have in so small a compass; the *Appreciations* has neither of these claims, but is simply a collection of literary essays, each almost faultless in itself, but without regular connection, and taking their place as *obiter dicta* rather than as a definite part of their author's work. The lectures on *Plato and Platonism* (1893) formed a somewhat disappointing and vague book, in spite of many beautiful passages and single phrases in which Pater's splendid sense of colour remained undimmed. During the next year he died, leaving his literary remains to the care of his friend Mr. C. L. Shadwell. Of these, the *Greek Studies* (1895) was a somewhat unequal collection of articles, less interesting than the *Miscellaneous Studies*, which appeared towards the close of the same year, and included chapters dealing with Greek, Italian, and other subjects—among them two charming papers, originally published in *The Nineteenth Century*, on a pair of great French churches. He had before this treated French art and literature with some affection, and not the least interesting of his works in this line had appeared, some years before his death, as a serial in *Macmillan's Magazine*. This unfinished and incoherent romance, *Gaston de Latour*, with its admirable pictures of Chartres Cathedral, Ronsard, and Montaigne, was published in the summer of 1896. Its plan recalls the scheme of *Marius*, and, had it been completed, it would have been worthy of its greater predecessor. A little later, these fragmentary books were supplemented by a small volume of essays which had, for the most part, been contributed to *The Guardian*. The influence of these later works has been inconsiderable, but the *Renaissance* and *Marius* made a profound impression on their generation, and were the brilliant starting-point of a new æsthetic movement which, if it is already dying out, has been wonderfully fertile during its existence. Moreover, no man of modern times—except, perhaps, Robert Louis Stevenson—has suffered so much imitation, good and bad, as Walter Pater. His work will never be popular in any wide sense, but its splendid distinction will never miss recognition.

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS, born a year later than Walter Pater, died a year earlier. He was, like Thomas Lovell Beddoes, to whose tastes his own were something akin, the son of a Clifton doctor. He went to Harrow and Balliol, where he came under Jowett's influence, and obtained a fellowship at Magdalen. A rich man himself, he never followed a regular profession, but became a

J. A. SYMONDS (1840–1893).

prolific author on various subjects. Eventually, his health drove him abroad; he settled at Davos and died there in 1893. He left behind him a very large body of work, principally in the form of literary and artistic criticism, and a good deal of poetry. His longest book, *The Renaissance in Italy*, the seven volumes of which appeared at intervals between 1875 and 1886, is a very excellent contribution to the literature of the subject, and must be regarded with gratitude as a stimulating force by every student of that intricate period. Unfortunately, Symonds did not successfully assume the air of historian or critic: there was always something amateurish in his writing, whose effect was unduly increased by a fatally decorative style. No man, using English, has ever given it so heavy a profusion of ornament, or has hung garlands so laboriously round his solid meaning. Symonds in this respect was guilty of the worst taste, and has received his penalty in the verdict of public opinion. Such books as the *Renaissance*, *The Greek Poets* (1873–6), and *Shakespeare's Predecessors* (1884), an elaborate study of the early English drama, have had their admirers, but they have sent as many people away disgusted with their ponderous and florid mannerisms. Symonds however, was one of those writers who opened the English mind to the appreciation of great periods in art and literature. Without exerting any particular influence, he has been widely read as an authority—or, if not exactly that, as an intelligent and sympathetic critic—on his subject, and much of his work has a value which may be obscured by time, but never totally forgotten. His English is an extreme instance of the dangers of that florid tendency in writers of otherwise good prose which Walter Pater undoubtedly possessed, but avoided more successfully. As a translator, he was more successful; his masterly version of Michael Angelo's sonnets (1878), and his prose translation of Cellini's *Autobiography* (1887), are perhaps the best essays in that difficult art which the nineteenth century can be said to have produced. The great point of union between Symonds and Pater was that their catholic sympathy with all forms of art, their common susceptibility to outward impressions, and their quiet and undogmatic methods of expressing themselves, did more than anything else to draw away enquirers from the narrow and prejudiced side of Ruskin's teaching. Thus they take an important place in the intellectual development of their century.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

OTHER PROSE WRITERS AND ESSAYISTS.

WALTER BAGEHOT (1826–1877), who was born, and died, at Langport in Somerset, is chiefly known as a political and economical writer, and as the editor, from 1860 to his death, of *The Economist*. By profession he was a banker in his native town, and his book on finance, *Lombard Street*, is a popular authority on its subject. He had, however, a strong taste for literature as such, and his *Literary Studies*, collected from various periodicals, and published after his death, contains much valuable, if not always sound, criticism. His reputation rests chiefly on his book, *The English Constitution*, which, like *Lombard Street*, is a brilliant and useful manual of a difficult subject, and on *Physics and Politics*, in which he applied the principles of Darwinism to the question of political changes.

SIR JOHN BARROW (1764–1848), born in very humble circumstances at Ulverston, was one of the most conspicuous writers on the *Quarterly* staff for many years after the review had been started. He wrote almost entirely on geographical subjects, contributing a whole literature on China, which he had visited with Lord Macartney's embassy, the Cape, where he had gone later on with Macartney, and the Arctic regions. He also wrote several books of travel and biography. He was the friend of Franklin and the Arctic explorers, and his name survives on the map in Barrow Straits and other places in the northern seas. He became second secretary to the Admiralty in 1804, founded the Royal Geographical Society in 1830, was created a baronet in 1835, and died in London, where he is buried. A tall tower, which is very conspicuous from the railway, was erected to his memory on a hill above Ulverston.

GEORGE BORROW (1803–1881) was a very remarkable man and wrote books which were as remarkable as himself. He was born at East Dereham in Norfolk; his father was a recruiting officer, whose constant shiftings from place to place brought the son, even in boyhood, into contact with many kinds of life. While in a lawyer's office at Norwich, the boy caught from the accomplished William Taylor a passion for philology which determined his career. The wanderings over England, recorded in *Lavengro* are without foundation in strict truth. He spent the period to which he assigns these adventures between London and Norwich. In 1833 he became agent for the Bible Society in Russia, and removing thence in succession to Portugal and Spain, left its service in 1840. During this period he did a great deal of translation from and into an incredible number of languages. Returning home, he married Mrs. Clarke, a widow whom he had known for some years, completed the purchase of an estate at Oulton, near Lowestoft, turned it into a sort of preserve for gipsies, and then made himself the "comet of a season" by *The Gipsies in Spain* (1841), and *The Bible in Spain* (1843). These curious works, written as autobiography, are so full of the marvellous and improbable that Borrow has earned a reputation for a very charming and original mendacity. However, the incidents of this and his subsequent books were intentionally fictitious, although founded remotely on the facts of his own life. In *Lavengro* (1851), the most autobiographical of all his books, he declared himself the avowed champion of Bohemianism, in bitter feud with respectable literary society. His recklessness of spirit affected both the thought and style of *The Romany Rye* (1857), *Wild Wales* (1862), and *Romano Lavo-Lil* (1874): but there is in these books enough

of true genius to overpower our sense of their eccentricity and offences against good taste. The most valuable piece of translation which he did was a version (1860) of Ellis Wynn of Lasynys' *Visions of the Sleeping Bard*, the most remarkable book in Welsh literature. The terror and the unpleasant imagery of this very Dantesque fantasy shocked many readers, and the book, withdrawn from circulation, is now very rare. Borrow lived for a time in Brompton, but died in his house at Oulton, faithful to his old eccentricities.

GEORGE BRIMLEY (1819–1857), a native of Cambridge and scholar and librarian of Trinity, obtained, among a small circle, a great reputation as a critic. Most of his work was done for *The Spectator* and *Fraser*, and for the *Cambridge Essays* (1855) he wrote an admirable critique on Tennyson. Had he lived longer, his name would be probably something more than a literary reminiscence.

JOHN BROWN (1810–1882), an Edinburgh doctor, was the friend of many eminent men of letters and, in *Horæ Subsecivæ*, whose three volumes appeared in 1858, 1861, and 1882, and in *Rab and his Friends* (1859), wrote with something of the same personal tenderness and human sympathy as Charles Lamb. *Rab and his Friends* and the beautiful biographical sketch of "Pet Marjorie" are almost perfect examples of the blending of humour and true pathos without the alloy of false sentiment.

SIR RICHARD FRANCIS BURTON (1821–1890), whose romantic life has been the subject of several fascinating books, may be regarded as a sterner and more scholarly Borrow. He lived abroad for the greater part of his life, and had the good fortune to marry a wife who idolised him and gave herself entirely up to his work. Although a writer of excellent and pure English, he confined himself, generally speaking, to translations of Oriental and other works. His great book was an unflinching version of *The Arabian Nights*, a costly work published by subscription at Benares. Lady Burton, his literary executor, brought out after his death an edition for general use. Among his other translations was one of Camoens' *Lusiad*; while his chief original work was his *Narrative of a Pilgrimage* to Medina and Mecca, undertaken as an Arab. Burton was certainly the greatest linguist of the nineteenth century, and his work is the work of a profound and disinterested scholar.

WILLIAM COBBETT (1762–1835), a native of Farnham in Surrey, began life as an agricultural labourer, but, when little more than twenty years old, enlisted and went to Nova Scotia. After his discharge in 1791, he gradually drifted into regular political writing, and, from 1792 to 1800, lived in Philadelphia and attracted notice as a violent pamphleteer on the loyalist side. In 1800 he removed to London, and, continuing his political work, started in 1802 *The Weekly Register*. He gradually became a Radical and in process of time adored all that he had previously tried to burn, getting himself into serious trouble and once into prison. In 1817 he was obliged to retire for two years to America, but came back to England and became M.P. for Oldham after the Reform Bill. He died in 1835 at his house near Guildford, where he had occupied himself with agricultural experiments. His political violence put aside, he was a master of forcible and idiomatic English, and a great journalist who represents the beginning of the popular newspaper. His style and humour were both inspired by the study of Swift. He published a great number of books, including an *English* and a *French Grammar* (1818 and 1823), a *History of the Protestant Reformation* (1824–7), and an admirable account of his political tours, the *Rural Rides* (1830).

JOHN WILSON CROKER (1780–1857), politician and man of letters, was born at Galway and was at Trinity College, Dublin, with Moore and other illustrious Irishmen. He entered Parliament as member for Downpatrick, and from 1809 to 1830 was Secretary to the Admiralty. He

was sworn of the Privy Council, and, had he chosen, might have taken high office more than once. However, he refused, retiring into private life after the Reform Bill. The great sorrow of his later years was his estrangement from Peel on the Corn-Law question. He was one of the earliest writers in the *Quarterly*, and, between 1809 and 1854, wrote about two hundred and sixty articles for it. His *Essays on the French Revolution* (1857) were reprinted from the review, and show a remarkable knowledge of their period. His principal work was an edition of Boswell (1831), which Macaulay, not without personal pique, criticised very harshly in the *Edinburgh*. In addition to these books, Croker worked industriously on eighteenth-century memoirs, especially on those of Lord Hervey and his wife, the beautiful Molly Lepel, and began to prepare that edition of Pope which has been finished by Mr. Elwin and Dr. Courthope.

ISAAC D'ISRAELI (1766–1848), the father of Lord Beaconsfield, was one of the early contributors to the *Quarterly*, and, although no great man of letters, left behind him several valuable historical works—notably the *Commentaries on the Life and Reign of Charles I* (1828–30)—and two or three collections of literary anecdotes, chief among them the eternally popular *Curiosities of Literature*, first published in 1791, and increased to six volumes between then and 1834. He also attempted romance, and was for a time rather prolific, but wrote no novel worthy of serious attention. In spite of his scanty originality, he was something of a literary force in his day and is a worthy type of the painstaking and accurate man of letters.

SIR EDWARD BRUCE HAMLEY (1824–1893), general in the British Army, was a good soldier and a versatile man of letters. From the Crimea to Egypt, he saw most active service that was to be seen during the second half of the nineteenth century; and his military work, *The Operations of War*, bears witness to his knowledge of his profession. His *Shakespeare's Funeral and other Papers*, *The War in the Crimea*, his genial and delightful parody of the *Idylls of the King*, called *Sir Tray*, with other contributions to solid thought or mere amusement, entitle him to a place in literature.

JAMES HANNAY (1827–1873) of Dumfries, after some service in the navy, devoted himself to journalism, wrote for the *Quarterly* and other periodicals, and from 1860 to 1864 edited *The Edinburgh Evening Courant*. He was well read and versatile, publishing during his life a pair of naval novels, *Singleton Fontenoy* (1850) and *Eustace Conyers* (1855), and a certain amount of critical and historical work, including a *Course of English Literature* (1866). In 1868 he became British Consul at Barcelona, where he died in 1873.

SIR ARTHUR HELPS (1813–1875), the son of a gentleman living at Balham, was educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge. He passed his first active years as private secretary, first to Mr. Spring Rice, and then to Lord Morpeth, and was, later on, a Commissioner of French, Danish, and Spanish claims. In 1860 he was made clerk of the Privy Council, and in 1872 became a K.C.B. His talents and judgment gained him the Queen's good opinion: he became her literary adviser, and supervised the publication of her books on her Highland life. He himself tried several kinds of writing, and at one time seemed to have gained a name of real distinction as an essayist and historian. His two series of *Friends in Council* (1847 and 1859), dialogues and essays on topics of general interest, brought him into favour with judicious readers. Although they are very agreeable and instructive, their thought is common-place, and in consequence they have lost their reputation. His chief historical work, *The Spanish Conquest in America* (1855–61), was chiefly distinguished by its opinions on slavery and colonial government: it earned more popularity in its second form, as a series of biographies. It is well

written and honest, if not very profound, and may still be studied with profit. Among Helps' other works, which are fairly numerous, the tragedy of *Oulita the Serf* (1858) and the quasi-novel called *Realmah* (1868) may be mentioned.

RICHARD HOLT HUTTON (d. 1897), editor of *The Spectator*, was a very remarkable and suggestive essayist, with an especial leaning towards philosophical and religious questions. His work was almost entirely published in the form of magazine essays, which are among the most brilliant contributions to the serious side of our periodical literature. Some of his essays have lately been collected into a volume, while others have appeared in collections like the *Wordsworthiana* of the Wordsworth Society. With no peculiar grace of style, he has left an indelible mark upon nineteenth-century thought. Among his other work may be mentioned his short *Life of Cardinal Newman* (1890).

RICHARD JEFFERIES (1848-1887) was the son of a Wiltshire farmer near Swindon. He naturally possessed an eye of singular acuteness and a heart of singular sensibility, whose working, visible in all his productions, was obvious only when he was dead. After a boyhood of little education and some adventure, and an early manhood of service as a local journalist and author of several unsuccessful novels and tragedies, he crept into notice as an occasional writer on rural life and scenery. At length, in *The Gamekeeper at Home* (1877), reprinted from *The Pall Mall Gazette*, he clearly demonstrated his extraordinary gifts as a naturalist and sympathetic observer of every form of country life. A similar reprint of occasional articles—*Wild Life in a Southern County* (1879)—was equally successful. The immediate successors of these two, constructed in the same way, were not so well received, but these again were followed by four works—*Wood Magic* (1881), *Bevis* (1882), *The Story of my Heart* (1883), and *After London* (1885)—in which, as naturalist and novelist, and the writer of a prose more nearly akin to poetry than any other in modern times, he secures a high place in literature. He died of consumption in 1887.

HENRY HILL LANCASTER (1829–1875), a native of Glasgow and lawyer in Edinburgh, did some excellent critical and historical work for the *Edinburgh* and *The North British Review*. The better part of his work was privately printed (1876) and appeared in two volumes with a preface by Dr. Jowett. Lancaster was a Balliol man and rose to considerable eminence at the Scots bar.

WILLIAM MAGINN (1793–1842) occupies a very important position in the history of journalism. He was born in Cork and was an LL.D. of Trinity College, Dublin. About 1819 he began to write for *Blackwood*, and, two years later, went over to Edinburgh and worked for more than one Tory journal. All his best things appeared in *Blackwood*, and he soon won some fame, not only as a critical essayist, but as a humorous writer of no mean power. From Edinburgh he went to London, where he might have done very well had it not been for an unhappy tendency to intemperance and a continual extravagance which kept him perpetually in debt. After a somewhat chequered period of seven years, he founded *Fraser's Magazine*, and, although never its editor, he was its guiding spirit in its palmy days, gathering round him Carlyle, Thackeray, and numerous other men of genius. Between 1828 and 1834 he wrote nothing for *Blackwood*, but from 1834 to 1838 wrote frequently both in *Blackwood* and *Fraser*, and produced his very best humorous work. His life was cut short by consumption soon after he had obtained his discharge from a debtors' prison. Maginn, a first-rate humorist, was also a very accomplished scholar, and wrote a series of clever essays on Shakespeare. His weaknesses, so well reproduced in Thackeray's portrait of Captain Shandon, prevented him from being actually a leader among his fellows, but as a stimulating influence in journalistic history he has no equal.

WILLIAM MINTO (1845–1893), an

Aberdeenshire man and professor of logic and English literature at his own University of Aberdeen, did some excellent and original critical work and has left his mark upon the study of literature. His *Manual of English Literature* (1872) and *Characteristics of English Poets from Chaucer to Shirley* (1874) were his principal books; in addition to these, he wrote some novels between 1886 and 1889, was the author of a book on *Defoe* (1879) in the "English Men of Letters" series, edited Scott's poetry (1887), and wrote leaders for the London Radical Press during Lord Beaconsfield's ministry of 1876–1880. He is one of the best representatives of the critical mind at the end of the nineteenth century: his opinions, even where seriously in need of support, were distinguished from haphazard conjecture by their foundation of sound scholarship.

JOHN STERLING (1806–1844), notable as the centre, for a brief space, of a brilliant intellectual circle, and famous as the subject of Carlyle's admirable *Life of Sterling*, was a son of Captain Edward Sterling, an Irishman who, from 1815 to 1840, was a very important member of the *Times* staff. He was born at Kames Castle in Bute, but his youth was spent at Llanblethian in Glamorganshire. He was at Trinity College and Trinity Hall, Cambridge, from 1824 to 1827, and made many friends, including Frederick Denison Maurice. He began to write early for the *Athenæum*, purchased it in 1828 and edited it for a short time, married and went out to the West Indies, and then, returning to England, took deacon's Orders and became curate to his former tutor, Julius Charles Hare, Rector of Hurstmonceaux. He soon left the active service of the Church, and gave himself up to journalism, writing essays and fugitive verse. He was, however, more remarkable as a talker on topics of literary and general interest. Although his life ended in consumption and he was obliged to live, now in Cornwall, now in the Isle of Wight, he was for years a conspicuous figure in literary society, and inspired an admiration which gathered round him a remarkable band of friends, known as the Sterling Club. His verse was laboured, and his two chief efforts, the tragedy of *Strafford* (1843) and *The Election* (1841), did not succeed with the public. In the two posthumous volumes of *Essays and Tales* (1848), edited by J. C. Hare, the papers on Carlyle (from the *Westminster*) and on Tennyson (from the *Quarterly*), with the romance of *The Onyx Ring* (from *Blackwood*) are worth reading.

CHAPTER XXV.

HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, AND THEOLOGY DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

§ 1. Growing attention to historical science. *Ancient history:* WILLIAM MITFORD, CONNOP THIRLWALL, GEORGE GROTE, GEORGE FINLAY, THOMAS ARNOLD, SIR G. CORNEWALL LEWIS. § 2. *Modern history:* HENRY HALLAM. § 3. LORD MACAULAY. § 4. JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE. § 5. EDWARD AUGUSTUS FREEMAN. § 6. JOHN RICHARD GREEN. § 7. *Philosophers:* JEREMY BENTHAM. The Hamiltonian system: SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON and DEAN MANSEL. § 8. ARCHBISHOP WHATELY and DR. WHEWELL. § 9. JOHN STUART MILL and utilitarianism. § 10. CHARLES ROBERT DARWIN and PROFESSOR HUXLEY. § 11. SIR HENRY MAINE. § 12. *Theology:* JOHN KEBLE, DR. PUSEY, and DEAN CHURCH. § 13. JOHN HENRY NEWMAN. § 14. WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE. § 15. DEAN STANLEY and Broad-church theology. § 16. THOMAS CHALMERS: his influence in Scotland.

Birth of the historical sense in literature.

§ 1. THE growth of historical science in modern Europe is almost as remarkable as the sudden rise of the novel. In this case the awakening to German influence which characterised the opening of the nineteenth century was as powerful as in every other instance. Just as Bürger's *Lenore*, in 1774, opened the way for the romantic movement, so, in 1811, Niebuhr's *Roman History* taught European scholars the advantage of scientific study in a subject which hitherto had been neglected. It taught them not only to estimate more accurately the value of original authorities, but to enter more fully into the spirit of antiquity and to think and feel as the ancients felt and thought. Previous writers of ancient history, with the exception of Gibbon, seldom had apprehended the ancient world as a living reality. In using their authorities they had shown no critical sagacity and no appreciation of the value of evidence, quoting the fabulous tales of a late mythographer and the sober statements of a contemporary writer as of equal importance. The study of ancient history was accompanied by a similar interest in modern history: all through the last quarter of the eighteenth and the first quarter of the nineteenth century the historical sense was in process of formation. The historian of to-day is expected to

produce in support of his facts the testimony of credible contemporary witnesses ; while the public records of most of the great European nations, now rendered accessible to students, have imposed upon historians a new labour in opening sources of information quite unknown to writers as enlightened as Hume or Robertson.

Ancient history: William Mitford (1744–1827).

A distinct and novel merit in historical writing begins to appear as early as William Mitford's *History of Greece* (1784–1810), which probably may be regarded as inspired by the great work of his friend Gibbon. Mitford was a Hampshire squire and had been a fellow-officer of Gibbon's in the Hampshire militia. It was hardly to be expected that Mitford would be extremely accurate, and, as a matter of fact, his work contains mistakes and errors of prejudice : but it still may have weight with the student as a historical authority. And Mitford's political views, which led him into an unqualified condemnation of democratic institutions, were the cause of two further histories of Greece. The earliest of these was the work of Connop Thirlwall, a Yorkshire clergyman who had been a fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, but had been obliged to resign his fellowship on political grounds. Thirlwall's *History of Greece* was in publication from 1835 to 1844. While it was appearing, in 1840, he was promoted to the see of St. Davids, which he held till his death in 1875. The character of the whole work is scholarly and rather heavy ; and it is not at all surprising that it practically was superseded by the *History of Greece* (1846–1856) of George Grote, a Radical banker and sometime member for the City of London. Grote, a schoolfellow of Thirlwall's at the Charterhouse, was the older man of the two, and had been collecting materials for a longer time. To say that his History is better than Thirlwall's is to do injustice to Thirlwall's far superior scholarship : Grote retains his place among historians, not on the ground of pre-eminent learning, but because he had a really picturesque sense of what he was writing about, and realised Greek history, not as a mere *tableau*, but as a great and living epoch in the story of the world. A further element which doubtless made for Grote's popularity was his extreme advocacy of the democratic principle. Thirlwall wrote always like a philosophical politician, Grote often like a mob-orator. But the fact remains that Grote achieved a popularity to which Thirlwall never has attained. Thirlwall is the historian for historians, Grote is the historian for the ordinary reader. He not only effectually superseded Mitford : he superseded Thirlwall, save with thorough students : and to-day his great book, a monument of industry, is regarded popularly as the history *par excellence* of the Athenian Empire. Grote in later life wrote voluminously on the Greek philosophers.

Connop Thirlwall (1797–1875).

George Grote (1794–1871).

The later history of Greece, covering the disastrous period of Roman, Byzantine, and Turkish rule, and coming down to modern times, found its chronicler in GEORGE FINLAY, who was five years younger than Grote and died in the same year with Thirlwall. His posthumously collected and published *History of Greece* (1877) forms a valuable sequel to Grote, and is nothing more or less than a supplement to Gibbon, although it did something to shake Gibbon's pet theories, and conveyed a more favourable impression of the Greeks of the Lower Empire.

GEORGE FINLAY (1799–1875).

The history of Rome was taken in hand by THOMAS ARNOLD, better known as head-master of Rugby. His incomplete *History of Rome*, whose three volumes (1838–43) end at the Second Punic War, is valuable chiefly as a popular exposition of Niebuhr's views. Its English is clear and masculine throughout. Arnold also published some *Introductory Lectures on Modern History* (1842), which display more independence of thought. He was also the author of several sermons which exercised great influence upon his generation. The most formidable opponent of Niebuhr was SIR GEORGE CORNEWALL LEWIS, equally remarkable as statesman and scholar, educated at Eton and Christ Church, and an office-holder in more than one cabinet. His *Enquiry into the Credibility of the Early Roman History* appeared in 1855. His great objection to Niebuhr was that "instead of employing those tests of credibility which are consistently applied to modern history, he attempts to guide his judgment by the indications of internal evidence, and assumes that the truth can be discovered by an occult faculty of historical divination." Sir George Lewis was editor of the *Edinburgh* from 1852 to 1855, and wrote several political and general treatises, the best known of which is his essay *On the Influence of Authority in Matters of Opinion* (1849).

THOMAS ARNOLD (1795–1842).

SIR G. C. LEWIS (1806–1863).

§ 2. The elder of the two historians who were the first to make modern history their own was HENRY HALLAM, whose critical judgment was superior to his grace of style. He was born at Windsor, where his father, the Dean of Bristol, had a canonry; was educated at Eton and Christ Church; and practised at the bar for a few years. Having an ample income, which was augmented by his appointment to a Commissionership of Stamps, he withdrew from his profession and devoted himself wholly to literature. He was one of the early contributors to *The Edinburgh Review*, where his criticism (1808) of Scott's edition of Dryden was marked by that power of discrimination and impartial judgment characteristic of all his subsequent writings. As one of the Edinburgh Reviewers, he was pilloried by Byron as "classic Hallam, much renowned for Greek." He was, indeed, an excellent classical scholar, who added to his know-

Modern history: HENRY HALLAM (1777–1859).

ledge of antiquity an accurate and profound acquaintance with the language, literature, and history of modern Europe. The first result of his long studies appeared in his *View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages* (1818), a very accurate and philosophical study, in a series of dissertations, of the medieval institutions of each European country. This was followed by *The Constitutional History of England from the Accession of Henry VII to the Death of George II* (1827); and, from 1837 to 1839, appeared a third great production, the *Introduction to the Literature of Europe during the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Centuries*. Hallam's later years were saddened by the loss of his two sons, the elder of whom was the subject of Tennyson's *In Memoriam*. The historian died in his eighty-second year.

No one was more qualified to speak of Hallam's literary merits than Macaulay. "Mr. Hallam," he said in his review of the *Constitutional History*, "is, on the whole, far better qualified than any other writer of our time for the office which he has undertaken. He has great industry and great acuteness. His knowledge is extensive, various, and profound. His mind is equally distinguished by the amplitude of its grasp and by the delicacy of its tact. His speculations have none of that vagueness which is the common fault of political philosophy. On the contrary, they are strikingly practical, and teach us not only the general rule, but the mode of applying it to solve particular cases. In this respect they often remind us of the Discourses of Machiavelli. The manner of the book is, on the whole, not unworthy of the matter. The language, even when most faulty, is weighty and massive, and indicates strong sense in every line. It often rises to an eloquence, not florid or impassioned, but high, grave, and sober: such as would become a State paper, or a judgment delivered by a great magistrate, a Somers or a D'Aguesseau. In this respect the character of Mr. Hallam's mind corresponds strikingly with that of his style. His work is eminently judicial. The whole spirit is that of the Bench, not of the Bar. He sums up with a calm, steady impartiality, turning neither to the right nor to the left, glossing over nothing, exaggerating nothing, while the advocates on both sides are alternately biting their lips to hear their conflicting statements and sophisms exposed. On a general survey, we do not scruple to pronounce the *Constitutional History* the most impartial book ever written."

Macaulay's opinion of Hallam.

§ 3. This was the opinion of an historian by no means impartial. THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY, born at Rothley Temple in Leicestershire, was the son of Zachary Macaulay, an ardent philanthropist and one of the earliest opponents of the slave trade. Educated at home and at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he obtained a fellowship, and called to the bar at Lincoln's Inn, he suddenly achieved a literary reputation by an article on

LORD MACAULAY (1800–1859).

Milton in *The Edinburgh Review* (1825). This was the first of the long series of brilliant literary and historical essays which he contributed to the same periodical. He entered Parliament in 1830 as member for Calne and almost immediately was acknowledged to be one of the first orators in the House. After the Reform Bill he sat for Leeds ; but in 1834 was sent out to India as a member of the Council in Calcutta and as President of the Law Commission. Returning home in 1838, he was elected member for Edinburgh in 1839, became Secretary for War in the same year, and Paymaster of the Forces in 1846. The religious prejudices of his constituents lost him his seat in 1847, and from that time forward he gave up politics for literature. He was returned for Edinburgh once more in 1852, but took very little part in the debates of the House. In 1857 he was created Lord Macaulay of Rothley, and died at the close of 1859.

Macaulay's first published book was actually the *Lays of Ancient Rome* (1842), a volume of stirring verse which, although distinguished from the highest poetry by many obvious differences, well deserved its popularity and has commended itself to all but the most fastidious critics. Its characteristics are those which appear in his work again and again—a vigour and directness of speech without circumlocution or artificial selection of phrase, a singular purity in the use of ordinary English, and a clear visual impression of its subject which goes far to make up for its absence of the higher poetic qualities. The book was eminently successful, but Macaulay's real genius was first seen in the *Essays* (1843) reprinted from the *Edinburgh*. They are philosophical and historical disquisitions embracing a vast range of subjects ; but the larger number and the more important relate to English history. No single book, perhaps, has had a greater influence on the mind of Englishmen of the present day. Macaulay's judgments and estimates of character are familiar to every person of any education. The reason of this is the clearness and picturesqueness of his style. Every sentence, conveyed in sound, matter-of-fact English, carries its own meaning without hesitation, and has the double merit of satisfying the scholar and the ordinary reader at one and the same time ; while, with its meaning, it conveys a vivid sense of reality, a picture of its own. This remarkable style is the perfection of what may be called the *Edinburgh* manner : its parent is to be found in Jeffrey's essays : it is the brilliant younger brother of Brougham's periodical work. It labours, as is natural, under certain mannerisms and a passion for antithesis which often carries Macaulay far beyond his mark and even into rash assertions. Nor is its matter exactly judicial : Macaulay wrote as a Whig for a Whig review, and indulged in the delights of partisanship : sometimes, as in the famous essay on Dr. Johnson, he made an arrogant

"Lays of Ancient Rome" (1842).

"Essays" (1843) : their style and matter.

attack on a book for whose author or editor he felt personal dislike. But for all this, his brilliant manner, his encyclopædic information, the general soundness of his judgment outside party questions, and his ability to reconstruct the people and features of a past age for his readers, make his *Essays* the classic book of English criticism.

The "History of England" (1849–61): its pictorial excellence.

The *History of England from the Accession of James II*, which began to appear in 1849, and, left incomplete at his death, received the addition of a posthumous volume in 1861, is only less famous than the *Essays*. Its object, inconsistent with the critical spirit of history, was the glorification of William III and the Whig triumph of 1688. Its second defect lay in that very clearness of vision which makes Macaulay so fascinating a writer. He saw merely the outside of things and had no perception of the eternal truths which lie below the surface of history; he had a phenomenal sense of the picturesque and of the general proportion of events; his diagnosis of character and policy was sound and forcible so far as it applied to a particular man and a particular time, but it was entirely wanting in that insight which makes Carlyle's less finished pictures so full of suggestion to every student. Yet, these defects—its partisanship and its merely pictorial character—apart, Macaulay's *History* is the most brilliant work of its kind in English. He gave his authorities real life, infusing a living picturesqueness into their frequent dryness; he knew each scene which he brought into his work; his generals and statesmen live in his pages as they live in their portraits by Lely or Kneller. As a vivid picture of a great historical period, written with a splendid command of language, teeming with life and interest on every page, the book is without a rival, and is Macaulay's abiding claim to immortality.

J. A. Froude (1818–1894).

§ 4. The most remarkable historian of the nineteenth century, after Macaulay and Carlyle (who was philosopher and teacher rather than historian), was the versatile James Anthony Froude. His father was Archdeacon of Totnes, and his brother, Richard Hurrell Froude, was one of the early apostles of the Tractarian movement. Froude himself was at Westminster and Oriel College, Oxford, and afterwards obtained a fellowship at Exeter. In the thick of the Oxford movement he took Holy Orders, but was one of those who, terrified by Newman's secession from the Anglican Church, abandoned his faith and became a philosophical sceptic. His publication of *The Nemesis of Faith* (1847) was the beginning of a very unpleasant epoch in his life; he resigned his fellowship and, after some hesitation as to another appointment, began to write for the magazines. The opening volumes of his *History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the defeat of the Armada* were published in 1856, the year after Macaulay's third and fourth volumes. The whole book was completed in

1869. Side by side with this immense work there came into the world various volumes of collected essays, several of extraordinary brilliance, and many illustrative of the *History*, under the general title of *Short Studies on Great Subjects*. Not content with his great work, he published, between 1871 and 1874, his *English in Ireland*. The great scheme of which he has left us fragmentary results was a history of the times of Charles V and Philip II. This, however, he did not live to carry out; while, from 1874 until his appointment as Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford in 1892, his attention was diverted from his main purpose by colonial travel and by his work (1881–4) on Carlyle's *Reminiscences* and biography. The scandal aroused by his alleged maltreatment of his dead friend and master's memory was a nine days' wonder; partly justifiable as it was, public opinion was very unfair to him. In 1889 he wrote an historical romance, *The Two Chiefs of Dunboy*. His final volumes, in the shape of new historical essays, a fresh examination of *The Divorce of Catherine of Aragon*, from the point of view of the Spanish Ambassador at Henry VIII's Court, and three fascinating volumes of Oxford lectures, were in no sense inferior to his earliest work. He died at Salcombe in Devonshire.

Faults of Froude's work.

Froude was, like Macaulay, a fierce partisan. He is likely to be remembered, too, for the greatest defect in his work, on which he insisted to the exclusion of its merits—his indefensible apology for Henry VIII, and, closely allied with it, his ferocious attack on Mary Queen of Scots. No historian has treated his subject with the same partiality and favouritism, or so wilfully has attempted to make and unmake established reputations among the dead. Naturally, Froude made more enemies than friends among the living. From *The Nemesis of Faith* to *Oceana*, and even later, he was at war, not with individuals, but with regiments of competent critics. As he belaboured Queen Mary, so was he belaboured; his advocacy of Henry VIII found him no advocate. In addition to this, he supported his arguments by a lamentable inaccuracy. No man was more sincere in his statements; no man, on the other hand, was less capable of putting them correctly. His evidence on the Spanish archives and the Casket letters is simply not to be trusted.

His historical sense.

Yet Froude was a great, a very great, historian. He did by Elizabethan history what Macaulay had done by the history of the Revolution. And he had, with all his inaccuracy of detail, a firm grasp of the meaning of history. "History," he himself wrote, "is the account of the actions of men. . . . The actions without the motives are nothing, for they may be interpreted in many ways, and can only be understood in their causes." Macaulay wrote with an eye to effect, which regarded actions far more than motive; Froude, under the influence of Carlyle, learned to see the importance of

motive in human affairs. His *History*, his essays and lectures, are all serious studies of the human spirit, going beneath the surface and searching for the motive cause of things. His conclusions are frequently insufficient, never impartial: but he gives the best possible statement of his side of the case, in the firm belief that he is right. Joined to this sincerity, with its argumentative and dogmatic faults, is a vivid picturesqueness, not far, if at all, inferior to Macaulay's. Froude had less aptitude for combining common words in unforgettable phrases, but he had none the less that lively interest in every past scene and personage which must underlie an interest in human life. His style, often rising to heights of real nobility, is disfigured by few mannerisms: if it is less brilliant than Macaulay's, it has far more variety. It is always strong and forcible, occasionally reminding the reader, although only distantly, of Carlyle: sometimes, in the earlier books, it is really eloquent. In his later days Froude's manner became more abrupt, and the short, jerky sentences of the admirable *Life of Erasmus* or the *Lectures on the Council of Trent* are a little monotonous and often awkward. In no sense was Froude a master of style: he used English rather as a strong and useful weapon of offence and defence, and, in his hard-won battles, employed it with not a little glory to himself.

§ 5. One of Froude's chief opponents and his predecessor in the chair of History at Oxford was EDWARD AUGUSTUS FREEMAN, fellow of Trinity. He was born at Writchley Abbey in Staffordshire, went to no public school, and was fortunate enough to obtain his fellowship with only a second class. On his marriage in 1847 he resigned his fellowship, and, being provided already with a sufficient income, found a congenial occupation in architectural and historical research and study. Architecture was the subject which first engrossed his attention, and he wrote a *History of Architecture*, published in 1849. His corresponding interest in archæology led him insensibly into the wider field of history. In 1856 he brought out a small volume of lectures on the *History and Conquests of the Saracens*, which shows that the leading characteristics of his thought and manner already were fixed. Of his pet doctrines, which were many, the public by this time had learned much in the columns of *The Saturday Review*. These were given a more lasting form in his *History of Federal Government* (1863), which never went beyond the first volume. The affairs of the next few years in America and Germany were unkind to some of his views, and he postponed proceeding with his work till their issue became clearer. He never resumed the task—the only high design which he laid aside of his own free will. Few will regret the consequent loss, for he turned from this scheme to a *History of the Norman Conquest* for which, during nearly twenty years, he had been collecting materials.

E. A. FREEMAN (1823–1892).

The "Norman Conquest" (1867–76).

He now pursued the composition with such diligence that the first volume was published in 1867. Being a rapid writer and having the full equipment for the treatment of his great theme, he was able to send forth the second in 1868, the third in 1869, and the fourth, which winds up the story of the Conquest, in 1871. The portly fifth volume, on the effects of the Conquest, involved heavier and more tedious labour, and did not appear till 1876. Thus Freeman's great history of the most important event in English history overlapped Froude, as Froude's work overlapped Macaulay's.

Later histories, etc.

This great work was by no means his only production during the years of its composition. More than half a dozen other volumes of varying size and importance, historical or founded on history, came out while the greatest was in progress. Of these, the *Old English History for Children* (1869), *The Growth of the English Constitution*, *Comparative Politics* (1873), and four volumes of *Historical Essays* still have a high general value. Freeman's warmth of conviction and hatred of Turkish rule drove him into vehement protest against Lord Beaconsfield's policy on the Eastern question, which he continued to denounce unsparingly until the storm had passed. His chief expression of opinion on this subject is contained in *The Ottoman Power in Europe* (1877). In 1881 appeared the third of his great contributions to history, *The Historical Geography of Europe*, in two volumes ; and in 1882 he supplemented his *Norman Conquest* with two further volumes on *The Reign of William Rufus*—a signal instance, not only of his remarkable minuteness of knowledge, but of the unbridled dominion which his sins of diffuseness and iteration had gained over him. The year after, he was appointed Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford, and his later books were made up chiefly of his professorial lectures. Of these *The Methods of Historical Study* and *The Chief Periods of European History*, both belonging to 1886, are fair samples.

But the largest of his schemes was yet to be undertaken. So great was his energy and faith in his own powers that in his last years he set to work on a *History of Sicily*, designed on a scale which a dozen thick volumes scarcely would have satisfied. In 1891 he published the first two volumes, and soon announced a third. But this was destined to appear posthumously. An insatiable student of historic grounds and sites, he had been, especially of late years, a great traveller on the Continent, and, while in quest of new material, he fell a victim to small-pox at Alicante.

General remarks.

It was Freeman's misfortune to be a mere historian ; from this limitation and from his strange vehemence of nature sprang his worst defects. History was an overmastering passion with him ; it possessed him, narrowing his vision by its very breadth, and blinding his sense of other things by its very light. "History," he said, "is only past

politics." He would have been, perhaps, a better historian had he been less of a politician, or had he known history less well and general literature better. His manner of writing is eminently plain, direct, and clear, but it is stiff and monotonous: the subject has no power over it. But for solid and certain knowledge gained we are deeply in his debt; while it never should be forgotten that it was he who first showed a full recognition of the connection between history, architecture, and geography.

§ 6. The historical work of JOHN RICHARD GREEN has a pathetic interest springing from its brilliant promise and its early interruption by illness and death. Green, the third of the great Oxford historians, was a product of Oxford in every sense. He was born there, received nearly his whole education there—first as a boy at Magdalen School, then as an undergraduate at Jesus College—and from Oxford came the influences that turned him to the study of history. But his abilities remained without recognition at school or college; he was friendless and lonely; and in 1859 graduated without distinction. Taking Holy Orders in 1860, he worked hard and with much success in London, and from 1866 to 1869 was incumbent of St. Philip's, Stepney. In this last year declining health and disquieting thoughts led him to give up clerical work and to restrict himself to his duties as librarian at Lambeth. In London his remarkable talent for history could not remain long without discovery; he became the esteemed friend of the foremost historical scholars, and was contemplating more than one extended scheme of historical work, when an alarming illness and the apparent approach of death compelled him to limit his ambition to the production of a single volume. On this, the *Short History of the English People* (1874), he expended his entire energy and care for nearly five years, amid circumstances of heavy depression and difficulties that only the strong conviction of a strong heart could have overcome. He wrote large portions of it over and over again, revising, cancelling, correcting, seldom satisfying himself, and often despairing of even a moderate measure of success. That the book was, however, a success, does not need to be told. It is the standard example of the application of imaginative writing to historical fact; and, however fair a mark for criticism it may be in several respects, it is obviously a creation of fine genius. It was expanded, between 1877 and 1880, into four volumes as a *History of the English People*. Green married in 1877, and his life was prolonged sufficiently to give him time for the composition of two other historical volumes of singular value, *The Making of England* (1882) and the posthumous *Conquest of England* (1883). These are detailed accounts of the creation and early growth of the English nation, the first ending with the triumph of Egbert, the second with that of William the Conqueror. Green died at Mentone, and is buried in the English cemetery there.

J. R. GREEN (1837–1883).

§ 7. The history of English philosophy during the nineteenth century begins with JEREMY BENTHAM, who was more than fifty years old in 1801. He was the son of a London attorney, was at Westminster and Queen's College, Oxford, and was called to the bar. He did not pursue his profession, however, but for half a century was the centre of a small but influential circle of philosophical writers, and was the founder of what is called the utilitarian school. In one of his earliest works, he laid down the principle that "utility is the measure and test of all virtue," and the fundamental principle of his philosophy was that happiness is the end and test of all morality. His fame, however, chiefly rests upon his writings on jurisprudence ; and almost all the improvements in English law that have been carried into effect since his time may be traced, either directly or indirectly, to his exertions. His chief books were, a *Fragment on Government* (1776), an *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1789), *A Book of Fallacies* (1824), and *The Rationale of Punishments and Rewards* (1825). As a politician he held strong Whig doctrines ; while the French Encyclopædists had the chief influence upon his intellectual position.

Philosophers: JEREMY BENTHAM (1748–1832).

The head of an important philosophical school was SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON, the son of a Glasgow professor. He was at Balliol College, Oxford, and was called to the Scots bar in 1813. In 1821 he was elected Professor of Civil History at Edinburgh, and in 1836 obtained the chair of Logic and Metaphysics, which he occupied till his death. His chief works were essays in *The Edinburgh Review*, collected as *Discussions on Philosophy, etc.* (1852), and an edition of Reid (1836–46), with dissertations, which was completed by Mansel. His lectures were published after his death, under the joint editorship of Dean Mansel and Professor Veitch. Sir William Hamilton founded his system on consciousness, following Reid more than any other master, and guiding his speculations by Aristotle and Kant. This is not the place for a discussion of his philosophical views ; it need only be said that he has done much, perhaps more than any other English writer, to raise the standard of philosophical study in this country.

SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON (1788–1856).

But Sir William Hamilton's work was surpassed by that of his disciple, HENRY LONGUEVILLE MANSEL. Mansel was the son of a Northamptonshire clergyman and was educated at Merchant Taylors' School and St. John's College, Oxford. He graduated with a double first in classics in 1843. His edition of Aldrich (1849), and his *Prolegomena Logica* (1851), gave him a place among the foremost mental philosophers of his day. In 1858 he delivered his famous course of Bampton lectures on *The Limits of Religious Thought*, and stated the principles of revelation in such terms that he was attacked by Frederick Maurice

HENRY LONGUEVILLE MANSEL (1820–1871).

in a somewhat vehement reply entitled *What is Revelation?* Mansel was made Waynflete Professor of Moral Philosophy in 1859, became Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Canon of Christ Church in 1866, and succeeded Milman as Dean of St. Paul's in 1869. He was the leader of Oxford Conservatism during his residence, and brought a singularly caustic wit to his conflicts with the opposite party. A treatise on *Metaphysics* (1860), originally contributed to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, a brief account of *The Philosophy of Kant* (1856), and his *Philosophy of the Conditioned* (1866), substantially exhaust the record of his remaining work. Although a vindicator of Hamilton against Mill, and a follower in many respects of Kant, Mansel occasionally criticises and dissents from both his masters. A thinker of great force and definiteness, with a tinge of metaphysical subtlety, his style is an improvement upon Hamilton's: it is more academic and carefully considered, and what was said of Hamilton by his admirers may be said more truly of Mansel, that he fills others with the "desire and despair of writing like a philosopher."

§ 8. RICHARD WHATELY, the son of Dr. Whately of Nonsuch Park, Surrey, was born in London and educated at Oriel College, Oxford. Having taken Holy Orders, he became Rector of Halesworth in 1822, Principal of St. Alban Hall in 1825, Drummond Professor of Political Economy in 1829, and Archbishop of Dublin in 1831. His first publication was the anonymous *Historic Doubts relative to Napoleon Buonaparte* (1819); in 1822 he delivered his Bampton lectures on *Party Feeling in Religion*, and, in 1826 and 1828, he published his *Logic* and *Rhetoric*, which had been written for the *Encyclopædia Metropolitana*. Among his later works were his essays on *New Testament Difficulties* (1828) and *Romanism* (1830). His lectures on *Political Economy* appeared in 1831, and later on he published other works on social and economical questions. He had a mind of great logical power, with little imagination or fancy, but a talent for keen and unsparing satire. His arguments, clear and unanswerable, produce immediate conviction in his readers. What he said of himself, that he was personally of no influence among men, has been disproved by the practical mark which he left upon Irish education, to mention only one instance; he was able so conclusively to exhibit his processes of reasoning and arguments that he produced a great impression on the circles which they affected. His views of questions were often shallow, but always practical; his style is luminous, easy, and well adorned with every-day illustrations. A moralist of a much higher tone than Paley—this was due to the general spirit of the time—he is the best representative of Paley in the present age. He was, as Paley was, clear rather than profound, and vigorous rather than subtle; with little speculation he united much practical sense.

ARCHBISHOP WHATELY (1787–1863).

WILLIAM WHEWELL, seven years younger than Whately, was the son of a carpenter at Lancaster. Coming from the North to Trinity College, Cambridge, he was in succession fellow, tutor, and master of his college. He wrote very copiously and on all manner of subjects, and his practically universal knowledge was renowned, not only at Cambridge, but all over England. "Science," it was said, "was his forte, and omniscience his foible." This excessive learning, which had been pursued to the exclusion of worldly knowledge, bred in him a temper which was the very reverse of intellectual humility. His chief philosophical works were *The History of the Inductive Sciences* (1837), and their *Philosophy* (1840). Earlier, in 1833, his *Astronomy and General Physics considered with reference to Natural Philosophy*, written as a Bridgewater Treatise, had created some stir. His knowledge, if unattractively expressed, was at any rate very profound, and, in his own day, he was not the least prominent among original thinkers.

WILLIAM WHEWELL (1794-1866).

§ 9. Foremost among the antagonists of the Hamiltonian school was JOHN STUART MILL, the most fearless of thinkers and the finest type of indomitable intellect that the nineteenth century saw. His father, James Mill, still known as the historian of India and the disciple of Bentham, fashioned him almost from his cradle to be the apostle of pure reason, the finished incarnation of the logical faculty, feeding his intellect with purely secular knowledge, leaving the seeds of feeling utterly untended, and jealously guarding the unfolding mind against the intrusion of religious influence. At eight the boy was deep in Greek, had read great part of Xenophon, Herodotus, and even Plato, and was familiar with most of the current histories of England. At fourteen he was well acquainted with Greek, Latin, and English philosophical literature, and had made progress even in mathematics and experimental science. This preposterous education failed to make Mill a scholar, but it forced, without enfeebling, his native faculty, and established industrious study as his habit and passion. A long visit to France, the sharpening experience of debating societies—he himself, at sixteen, founded one which he called the "Utilitarian"—and other forms of mental discipline, fixed the tendency which his nature had taken from education, and fostered in him the faith that it was his destiny to be an effective worker in the cause of humanity. In 1823 he was admitted to a clerkship in the India House, where his father held an important post, and, showing there a special talent for the finest kind of administrative work, he eventually became chief of his office, and so secured a substantial income. The bent of his genius was directed by reading Dumont's *Traité de Législation*, a French exposition of Bentham. This, in his own words, supplied him with "a creed, a doctrine, a philosophy . . . a

JOHN STUART MILL (1806-1873).

religion," whose propagation he marked out for himself as his great task among men. So swiftly did he fit himself for this office that while yet scarce a stripling he was the hope of the "philosophic Radicals."

For a time he briskly trod the path which his father and his friends had traced for him, and contributed to *The Westminster Review* papers that raised their hopes. But in a few years he instinctively recoiled from the groove in which they wanted to confine him; a fretful discontent came over his spirit; and the *Mémoires* of Marmontel, which he happened to read about this time, awakened him to wider and higher aspirations. Poetry, especially Wordsworth's, began to attract him; emotions, hitherto unsuspected, came to the surface; he ceased to be a mere intellectual machine, and began to nourish himself with robust passion and generous sentiment. This change, augmented by a close friendship with Sterling and Carlyle, had its influence on his whole life, but to the end his leading faculty was the intellectual, which the heat of social and other enthusiasms never put out of sight.

By this time he had convinced himself that the scientific method was as obligatory in the examination of human conduct as in physics. Its employment, he thought, led to conclusions in morals and politics as certain and as little dashed with error as those of Kepler and Newton. Acting on this belief, he took upon himself the office of setting men in the way of thinking correctly on their most vital concerns, and made this his special aim in his four years' editorship (1836–40) of *The London and Westminster Review*. His greatest effort towards this end, however, was his *System of Logic* (1843), on which he laboured long; and this, although his first, is recognised as his greatest work—a miracle of rigorous and stubborn reasoning. It set upon a strong foundation both its author's fame and the principles of the philosophical school which his father had founded. This philosophy, known as the Philosophy of Experience, is the exact opposite of Hamilton's intuitional system: for, as its expounder declares, "it derives all knowledge from experience, and all moral and intellectual qualities from the direction given to the associations." As an exhaustive text-book of this system, Mill's *Logic* is not likely to be supplanted. With the same view he composed his second masterpiece, the *Principles of Political Economy* (1848), which was distinguished by the same courage, clearness, and originality as the work on *Logic*. It was at once widely read, and its influence has proved itself as extensive as its popularity. It still holds the first rank in the literature of economics: in Cairnes' opinion, "all that renders political economy a complete and well-organised body of knowledge has been the work of Mill."

The "System of Logic" (1843), etc.

Mill's later writings diffused rather than added to his fame. They are somewhat numerous; for, in 1858, when the Company

ceased to govern India, he received an excellent pension, and had leisure to work exclusively at his self-appointed function. His little volume *On Liberty* (1859), is a fervent and stimulating appeal for the largest possible measure of emancipation from restraint in the dealings of civilised men with each other. In 1860 he published another book, on *Representative Government*. In *Utilitarianism* (1861), he defends his cherished beliefs against the manifold attacks made upon them from various sides. His *Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy* (1865) was an attempt to carry the Hamiltonian position by storm, and by the use of a fiery and dexterous logic. His *Subjection of Women* (1869) is a comprehensive arraignment of the existing position of woman in society, and a plea for her elevation to an equality with man.

Later life.

His election as Liberal member for Westminster in 1865, unsolicited on his part, drew him into public affairs. For three years he was a man of mark in Parliament, an observant and intensely interested debater, zealous for many things, and especially for the success of unfamiliar or distasteful schemes of reform, and for corrective checks on the coming democracy. Rejected, however, in 1868, he retired to his southern home near Avignon, and lived there and at Blackheath till his death in 1873. A comparatively brief but most valuable *Autobiography*, and three essays, on *Nature*, *Utility of Religion*, and *Theism*—none of them very enlightening on their several subjects—were published after his death. These, with some volumes of scattered papers recovered from reviews and collected under the title of *Dissertations and Discussions* (1859–76), complete the sum of Mill's contributions to our literature. His place in the history of the human mind is tolerably definite. He was the unshrinking and luminous exponent of a philosophy that subjects the mind of man to the processes used in investigating external nature: he classes the manifestations of the human spirit with the phenomena of the material world, while he professes to draw from these principles rules of conduct that lead to the moral and social amelioration of the race. He is the accredited prophet of those utilitarian doctrines which his father, in his *Analysis of the Mind*, put into systematic shape.

CHARLES ROBERT DARWIN (1809–1882).

§ 10. The whole current of English and European thought in the nineteenth century has been changed by the scientific work of CHARLES ROBERT DARWIN, not merely a scientist but a man of letters. He was born at Shrewsbury, and was the grandson of two notable men, Erasmus Darwin of Lichfield, and Josiah Wedgwood of Etruria. His father was a doctor, and sent him to Edinburgh University to study medicine. However, he showed an unconquerable aversion for some of its necessary studies; and, in 1827, he was transferred to Christ's College, Cambridge, with a view to his taking Holy Orders. This purpose faded from his mind; he turned to scientific enquiries

and brought himself under the notice of Henslow, then Professor of Botany. Immediately after taking his degree, he was appointed, by Henslow's recommendation, naturalist in the *Beagle*, which had been sent on a surveying voyage round the world. This voyage lasted nearly five years, from December 1831 to October 1836; and Darwin's work upon it was the making of his genius and the foundation of his fruitful speculations in the future. His *Voyage of a Naturalist round the World*, first published separately in 1845, had, moreover, more than a purely scientific interest. In 1839 he married his cousin, Miss Wedgwood, and in 1842 settled to his life's work of secluded research at Down in Kent—a work which he was to pursue "without haste or rest" for forty years. He was just fifty when its first astonishing result, the book entitled *On the Origin of Species by means of Natural Selection* (1859), was placed before the public. Its general reception, the repugnance and panic which it raised in certain quarters, the fierce resistance that was offered it at first, the reluctant submission and eventual reconciliation of its opponents to its positions, the long doubtful attitude of portions of the scientific world itself, and the book's ultimate triumph, are now among the tritest commonplaces of history. One or two other publications, chiefly designed to strengthen the central position of the *Origin of Species*, followed. In 1871 his second great work, *The Descent of Man*, appeared, in which he maintained the theory that our ancestor was "a hairy quadruped furnished with a tail and pointed ears, probably arboreal in his habits." This, which has not been, and perhaps never can be proved to demonstration, has been accepted as a working hypothesis by most biologists. The sensation and antagonism it provoked were mild when compared with the storm of twelve years before, but it profoundly and permanently impressed the thoughts of thinking men on the most vital questions; and the great doctrine of evolution, so familiar to everyone and so demonstrable in every department of life, thus became current. Henceforth he gave his chief attention to the habits of plants, which already had been noticed by him in more than one publication; and on this subject he published several books. But his latest and, perhaps, his third most interesting book was his famous monograph (1881) on the value of earthworms in the earthly economy. On April 19, 1882, he died at Down, and, a week later, was buried in Westminster Abbey with every mark of a nation's reverence.

The theory of evolution.

The theory of evolution has had upon its side the convincing advantage of literary skill in more cases than that of Darwin. It has its philosopher in Mr. Herbert Spencer, whose work, if little known to the general public, has had a wonderful influence upon general habits of thought, and, as a systematic body of philosophy, is inferior to nothing since the day of Bacon. Its most brilliant literary champion was the distinguished biologist,

THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY, who added to his scientific knowledge the advantage of a keen and lucid style. Huxley was born at Ealing and entered the navy as a doctor. He made an early reputation, and, for most of his active life, was a Professor in London and took a great interest in the work of the Royal Society. His literary work consists chiefly of essays and addresses on scientific and philosophical subjects, and his best exhibition of his powers of writing was the small *Life of Hume* (1879) which he contributed to Macmillan's "English Men of Letters" series. His services to science, conspicuous as they were, had in his lifetime a reputation somewhat subordinate to his militant agnosticism, which led him into expressions of opinion not always too mild or carefully considered. His collected works, however, contain evidence enough to prove that he possessed one of the most acute intellects of his century, the keenest of wits, and an amazing gift of successful versatility.

T. H. HUXLEY (1825–1895).

§ 11. In political philosophy, a method nearly akin to Darwin's was applied, with hardly less acuteness and success, to the elucidation of early law and custom and their meaning for the present day. This task was performed by the discerning and constructive intellect of SIR HENRY JAMES SUMNER MAINE, who was also remarkable for his efficiency in public business. His career was a proof of this double genius. All through life he held simultaneously and in unbroken succession a number of academic and state appointments. He was the son of a Scottish physician and was educated at Christ's Hospital and Pembroke College, Cambridge. When only twenty-five he became Regius Professor of Civil Law at Cambridge, and, when thirty, Reader in Jurisprudence at the Middle Temple. The result of his legal labours was his first book, *Ancient Law* (1861), which is perhaps the most important work in English on its subject. Seldom has such a theme been handled in so masterly a fashion, or so fascinating a book come from materials so unpromising. By a strict adherence to the comparative and historic methods, as distinguished from the *à priori* reasonings or elaborate guesses of preceding times, it shed a stream of unexpected light on the connection of ancient law "with the early history of society and its relation to modern ideas." The very completeness of its success has dimmed the fame of its author; for its positions, once so original, are now so familiar as to seem nothing extraordinary. Maine sprang at once into celebrity. In 1862 he went to India as legal member of the Council, and there found the materials for his second notable book, the professorial lectures on *Village Communities in the East and West* (1871), in which he demonstrated the evolution of much that is characteristic in later social organisation to a primitive institution not yet extinct. The central principle of this book has been vigorously dis-

SIR HENRY MAINE (1822–1888).

puted, but there is no doubt as to its exceptional interest to the historical and general student. In the same year he was knighted and appointed to a seat in the Indian Council at home; while at Oxford, in 1869, the Corpus Professorship of Jurisprudence was founded practically for him. His second course of professorial lectures was published in 1875 as *The Early History of Institutions*; but he gave up his chair in 1878, the year after his election as Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge. He retained his public office till his death. *Dissertations on Early Law and Custom* (1883), his last addition to the literature of his special subject, worthily upheld his reputation. Two years later he rendered his last, but not least valuable service to correct thought—a collection of articles from the *Quarterly*, to which he gave the name of *Popular Government*. Like every other of his writings, this made a deep impression when published, and is full of profitable matter for future generations.

Theology: John Keble (1792–1866).

§ 12. The literary interest of nineteenth-century theology springs chiefly from the Oxford movement, that great revival in the Anglican Church which has been the source of her later activity. As the Evangelical revival had appealed to man as an individual soul, so the Oxford movement reminded him of his duties and privileges as the member of a corporate body. The beginning of the movement is generally reckoned from an Assize sermon preached at Oxford in 1833. Its subject was *National Apostasy*, and the preacher was JOHN KEBLE, then a Gloucestershire curate. He was the son of the scholarly vicar of Coln St. Aldwin's, and was born at Fairford, a little town at the head-springs of the Thames, long famous for the magnificent windows of its parish church. From his father, an old-fashioned High Churchman, he learned his strong Churchmanship. His home, too, was his only school; but, under his father's tuition, he made so much progress that, in his fifteenth year, he won a scholarship at Corpus. His career at Oxford was unusually brilliant; he obtained a double first, and was elected to an Oriel fellowship at nineteen. He stayed in Oxford for twelve years longer, and then, in 1823, went back as curate to his father's parish. Henceforth he was an unaspiring, unworldly country parson, who made his influence felt in the outer world by his poetry, his pupils, and an occasional sermon or tract, and watched all movements affecting the Church with an anxious eye, while he steadily became an object of unsought love and reverence. All the while he laboured on at his parish work with unmitigated devotion. The book that has almost sanctified his name, *The Christian Year*, published in 1827, and augmented by six poems in the third edition (1829), represents a steady cultivation of poetry during eight years; for some of the pieces had been seen as early as 1819. Yet Keble himself thought its publication premature; had it not been for the importunities

of his friends he would have gone on "improving the series all his life," and left it "to come out, if judged useful," after his death. Had he been allowed his own way ninety-five editions, the least of which consisted of 3000 copies, would have been lost to the world in his lifetime. In another year these had swollen to fourteen more ; nor does the work yet show any sign of declining popularity.

It was Newman who attributed the origin of the movement to the sermon of 1833. Keble was undoubtedly a powerful force, although no conspicuous figure, in the sequel, and wrote seven of the wonder-working "Tracts for the Times." In 1836, having again and again refused offers of preferment, he accepted the vicarage of Hursley, near Winchester ; and to do his part there faithfully was his chief ambition for the rest of his life. He had been elected, however, in 1831, to the chair of Poetry at Oxford, and held the office for ten years, taking great pains with his lectures, which, according to custom, were given in Latin. His second volume of verse, *Lyra Innocentium*, appeared in 1846 ; but, despite the beauty and charm of many of its poems, it was not nearly so popular as *The Christian Year*. Of his many subsequent publications, his edition of Hooker (1836) and *Life of Bishop Wilson* (1863) are perhaps the most generally valuable. The extraordinary popularity of *The Christian Year* may fairly be attributed to its perfect fusion, in the exactest proportions, of the poetic with the religious temperament. In Keble there met together for the first time the eye and the sensibility of a poet, the cultivated judgment and classical taste of a trained scholar, the convinced faith of a Christian, and the devotional spirit of a loyal Anglican. Nature and time of birth made him a poet of the Wordsworthian type ; circumstances gave him ardent Churchmanship and a refining and enriching culture. That the balance of poetry and Churchmanship was not so evenly maintained in the *Lyra Innocentium* is doubtless the explanation of its comparative failure.

DR. PUSEY (1800–1882).

The effectual leader of the Oxford Movement was EDWARD BOUVERIE PUSEY. A member of a Wiltshire family, of French origin, which did not assume an English name till his childhood, Pusey entered Christ Church, after his school days at Eton, in 1819, took, in 1822, a first-class in classics, and, in 1823, became fellow of Oriel. He then studied for a time in Germany, and by 1828 had acquired so much theological and Oriental learning, and had demonstrated his capacity so clearly, that the Crown appointed him Regius Professor of Hebrew and Canon of Christ Church, and so gave him an official connection with the Church which lasted till his death. Kindly disposed to the Oxford movement from the first, he was yet slow to join it ; but his adhesion, once made, decided its fate. His high standing, solid reputation, and steadfast character brought to it an assurance of stability which its ardent young promoters could not bring of themselves, a

champion of its principles whose credit ensured them a hearing, and a "head and centre" for its disciples throughout the country. By his writings and sermons he fixed its beliefs; he fought its battles, directed and cheered on its partisans, suffered for it, toiled for it, and stood to its original principles with inflexible constancy throughout. No wonder, then, that its disciples came to be called by his name. But the grave and measured speech, the learning and reasoning that he put into his contributions to the "Tracts for the Times," his several sermons on the Real Presence, Confession, and other doctrines, his work on Daniel, his commentary on the Minor Prophets, and his *Eirenicon* (1865), can secure these writings a place in theological literature only.

To none, however, of the prophets of this school does the mind that loves the things of the mind turn with warmer regard than to RICHARD WILLIAM CHURCH, the greatest among the younger men of the movement. He was born at Lisbon of an Irish father and a German mother, and passed his early boyhood chiefly in Italy. Coming home in 1823, he eventually graduated at Wadham College, Oxford, with a first-class in classics, and in 1838 was elected fellow of Oriel. At Oxford he was caught in the great movement, was brought into the closest relation with Newman, and clung steadfastly to its principles and his friendship with Newman when both alike seemed lost. To the first organ of the movement, *The British Critic*, he contributed a series of papers which he afterwards recast into his *Saint Anselm* (1870); and in the second, *The Christian Remembrancer*, appeared his masterly essay on *Dante*, published in 1850, and now reckoned among the choicest classics of English criticism. Another of his essays in the same periodical, *The Early Ottomans* (1854), is perhaps the best account in English of the rise and growth of the Turkish power. In 1853 he married and retired to the quiet living of Whatley, near Frome, where he had great leisure for study. There he remained, declining to accept any preferment or dignity, till 1871, when he yielded to his friends' persuasions and became dean of St. Paul's. The industrious peace of Whatley now bore excellent, if not abundant fruit. In 1879 a monograph on *Spenser*, in 1884 another on *Bacon*, gave us the most able short studies which we possess of their several subjects; successive volumes of sermons, collections of essays, and lectures, bestowed on the world the best thoughts of a mind of rare justness, insight, elevation, and refinement. He left at his death, finished and almost ready for the press, an account of *The Oxford Movement*, which worthily narrates that memorable chapter of Church history from the point of view of a clear-eyed friend and promoter. His most prominent sermons and lectures are those which aim at expounding the relations of modern civilisation to the eternal truths of religion, and those

DEAN CHURCH (1815-1890).

which examine the influence of Christianity on national character. In tone, in temper, in large and liberal knowledge, in their grasp of the grand verities of faith, and in their appropriate literary graces, these perhaps are unsurpassed among their kind. They are the happiest union of orthodox theology with the highest literary culture.

§ 13. But the most illustrious leader of the Oxford movement, and one of the very greatest masters of English prose in any century, was JOHN HENRY NEWMAN, afterwards Cardinal. He was born in London; his father was a banker whose house failed at the end of the great war; his mother was a lady of Huguenot extraction. The straitest Calvinism encompassed his childhood and so shaped his naturally plastic mind that from the first religion was to him the master concern of life. Although, as an undergraduate at Trinity College, Oxford, he won no distinction, he was yet able, in 1822, to gain the highest then open to him, a fellowship at Oriel. This in time brought him into close but not lasting association with Whately. From Keble he was kept apart for a year or two by mutual prejudice; but, this once removed, spiritual affinities drew the two together in a union that stood the severest strain ever imposed on such a bond. Keble had much directly to do with the formation of Newman's religious temper, but the indirect influence which he exerted through his devoted friend, Hurrell Froude, was even greater. During these years Newman was himself becoming a power in Oxford, and, in 1828, when he became vicar of the University Church, he rose into a prominent position among the younger dons. It was through the sermons which, from that time, he preached in St. Mary's on successive Sunday afternoons that his magic power impressed itself on the souls of his audience. They bore away in their hearts "words and thoughts which were a religious music—subtle, sweet, mournful." However, his first important publication, *The Arians of the Fourth Century* (1833), had hardly any of the peculiar grace and charm which distinguished his preaching. Its historical accuracy also has been attacked; but its biographical and theological interest is still great.

CARDINAL NEWMAN (1801–1890).

In September, 1833, the active work of the Oxford movement began with the first of the "Tracts for the Times." Newman was its author. He had just returned from a long journey on the Continent, in the course of which he had passed through a dangerous illness, and had brought back with him a firm persuasion that a tremendous task was laid upon him at home. An abiding fruit of his journey, and an indication of the serious purpose on which he was bent, is the matchless hymn, "Lead, kindly Light," written in the Mediterranean. Although a less prominent leader than others, he was for eight years, at least, the intellectual and spiritual centre of the work; and of the ninety tracts which gave the movement its earliest name, "the bulk,

Newman and the Oxford movement.

and the most forcible," were his. It was his task to revivify Church doctrine, to convert neglect or listless assent into ardent belief, and therefore his greater works of this time of conflict are too exclusively theological and controversial to find a place in general literature. *The Via Media* (1837), published at first under a longer title, and the *Lectures on Justification by Faith* (1838) may serve as examples. The literature of the pulpit was enriched incalculably by the seven volumes of *Parochial and Plain Sermons* (1837–43), embracing his Sunday afternoon addresses at St. Mary's. From his contributions to *The British Critic* he collected some volumes of *Essays, Critical and Historical*, which contain much of wide general interest. Not a little verse, too, of unique sweetness and tenderness, belongs to this period and bears full witness to his gift of poetry. Most of this, reprinted with pieces of similar character by other poets, formed the collection called *Lyra Apostolica* (1836). But in 1841 the fierce storm which he raised by his attitude in the famous Tract 90, together with one or two other incidents, awoke in him misgivings and eventually a conviction that his position was false. In 1843 he resigned St. Mary's and withdrew into seclusion at Littlemore. In October, 1845, he was received into communion with the Church of Rome. In 1848 he entered the Oratory of St. Philip Neri at Birmingham, and passed the rest, all but a few years, of his life there.

Whatever the consequences of this step may have been to the Church which he abandoned, literature lost nothing by the change. Not only do his later writings testify to a marked quickening of the literary sense, but they have, for the most part, a literary excellence quite apart from their theological or polemical value. The first book after his great crisis, *Loss and Gain* (1848), reflected his own experience in a purely imaginative form. Between 1854 and 1858 he was living in Dublin as rector of the lately founded Roman Catholic University. Certain discourses which he delivered in this capacity were published as *The Idea of a University* (1852), a work remarkable for its depth and strength of thought and feeling, its generous wisdom, and its piety and eloquence. Four years later came a second characteristic work of fiction, *Callista, a Tale of the Third Century* (1856), described by its author as "an attempt to imagine and express the feelings and mutual relations of Christians and heathens at the period to which it belongs." This, to many of Newman's admirers, is, of all his works, the truest and fullest image of his mind and spirit; but it never attained the celebrity of some of the others.

His secession to Rome.

In 1864 Kingsley, whose *Hypatia* has overshadowed the merits of *Callista*, was thoughtless enough to write a magazine article in which he imputed to Newman and the Roman clergy generally an habitual attitude of equivocation. Proof was at once demanded; a controversy ensued in which Newman had the ad-

The "Apologia" (1864) and later work.

vantage of his adversary and used it mercilessly; and Kingsley was stung into writing a pamphlet which was a virtual arraignment of Newman's whole career. Newman's answer was the world-famed *Apologia pro Vita sua*, written rapidly in the early spring of 1864. The result of this work was a complete alteration of national feeling towards the author; distrust and suspicion gave way to esteem and even pride; a general interest was aroused which never flagged till his death. Tokens of this juster and happier disposition may be read in his election (1877) to an honorary fellowship at his first college, Trinity, and in the general satisfaction when Pope Leo XIII, in 1879, raised him to the Cardinalate. His other Roman works, like the *Lectures on Anglican Difficulties* (1850), were chiefly theological and controversial. His later sermons show a somewhat florid exuberance of rhetoric which was absent even from the most lyric passages of his Oxford discourses. But *The Dream of Gerontius* (1868) and the *Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent* (1870), widely different as they are, agree in standing out prominently from his other works of the time. While his one volume of verse, the *Verses on Various Occasions* (1868), bears witness in its later pieces to a decidedly less generous vein of poetry than that which runs through the early poems from the *Lyra Apostolica*, *The Dream of Gerontius* demonstrates the contrary. Never has the imagination won a more signal victory. In alliance with a spiritual sense of rare intensity it has transferred in this poem certain conceptions of the theologian into a psychological picture of extraordinary beauty. The *Grammar of Assent* is an attempt to ascertain the elementary principles on which belief is given or withheld, and to justify the implicit faith that cannot always justify itself. Cardinal Newman died at Birmingham on August 11, 1890, followed to the grave by the love and reverence of well-nigh the whole nation.

Newman's style.

Our weightiest authorities in criticism are singularly unanimous in their opinion of Newman's style. To them it is the nearest to perfection of any that our speech can show. When at its best, a better is barely conceivable. Its strength is in quietness and confidence; its tone of perfect moderation and perfect conviction impresses our minds and secures our respect; ease, delicacy, grace, measure, and finish, without an effort win a ready way to the reader's heart; abundance without excess, artistic yet unaffected simplicity, the telling word, the telling phrase, each seemingly spontaneous, seemingly unobtruded, the orderly arrangement, the perfect harmony of sentiment and expression, the chasteness of diction that no tawdriness dare approach, above all, the subdued yet variously modulated musical note that is never absent—these and other virtues of style work together to give an unparalleled distinction and charm to everything of the higher kind that Newman wrote.

§ 14. Among the lay champions of the Anglican Church in the nineteenth century the most remarkable was WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE. His life belongs to politics rather than literature; and it is sufficient to say here that he was born in Liverpool, where his father, Sir John Gladstone, was a well-known merchant, that he was at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford, where his sentiments threw him heart and soul into sympathy with the Tory and High Church party, that he was returned to Parliament as member for Newark in 1832, that, after a gradual change to the principles of Liberalism, he became the illustrious, versatile, and autocratic leader of the Liberal party, and that, retiring from his position when far beyond the ordinary age of man, he died at Hawarden Castle on Ascension Day, 1898. His first book, *The State in its Relations with the Church* (1838), was the subject of a famous review in the *Edinburgh* by Macaulay. The interval between this and his next theological work, *Ecce Homo* (1868), is marked chiefly by his invaluable *Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age* (1858). From 1868 onwards he became an indefatigable pamphleteer and writer on general questions. In *Juventus Mundi* (1869) he returned to his classical studies; but his opposition to the Public Worship Regulation Act of 1874 drew him into a long controversy with Roman ecclesiastics, in which he took an uncompromisingly anti-papal position. His *Homeric Synchronism* (1876) intervened between this and a second controversy, in which, dictated by his Christianity rather than by any political ambition, he violently attacked the Turkish policy in Bulgaria and Disraeli's attitude to the Eastern Question. In 1879 he published a collection under the title of *Gleanings of Past Years*. During the stormy and critical period of his life, from 1880 to 1890, he was silent; but, in 1890, he issued two new works, *Landmarks of Homeric Study* and *The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture*. The final years of his life were given up to an elaborate edition of Bishop Butler's works. Gladstone is the type of the industrious scholar and student; he was a voracious reader, and his memory was singularly accurate. His style was scholarly and weighty, but, in its very purity, somewhat undistinguished; while the fatal lack of humour which was so apparent in all his actions, and placed him at such a disadvantage as compared with his great opponent, Disraeli, gave it an additional heaviness. It is hardly likely that, in a few years, his books will continue to be read. However, as a controversialist, he was extraordinarily able, and, as a devout believer in the religion which he professed, carried an enormous weight of conviction. He was the *beau idéal* of the layman whom the Oxford movement called to life.

W. E. GLADSTONE (1809–1898).

§ 15. The most distinguished member of the Broad Church party and opponent of the Oxford school of thought was ARTHUR PENRHYN STANLEY. He was born at Alderley in

Cheshire, the living of his father, Edward Stanley, who was a younger brother of the first Lord Stanley of Alderley and afterwards became Bishop of Norwich. He was sent to Rugby, where he became a favourite pupil of his father's friend, Dr. Arnold; and, proceeding to Balliol in 1834, entered on a brilliant career at Oxford. He became Fellow and Tutor of University College, and remained in residence for many years. He gained a place in literature at once by his *Life and Correspondence of Dr. Arnold* (1844), a biography as remarkable for literary skill as for devotion to the memory of a master and friend whose influence moulded his whole career. He was at this time a contributor to Dr. (afterwards Sir) William Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography*, and, at a later period, he wrote some characteristic articles for the *Dictionary of the Bible*. As select preacher before the University (1845) he delivered the discourses published as *Sermons and Essays on the Apostolic Age* (1847), the first book in which he displayed his special capacity for reproducing the scenes of sacred and ecclesiastical history in their living spirit as he conceived it, and with the charm of pictorial vividness. The same character was stamped on the four essays which, as Canon of Canterbury Cathedral (1851), he published under the title of *Historical Memorials of Canterbury* (1854). His peculiar faculty of "picturesque sensibility"—to use one of Lord Beaconsfield's happy phrases—was still more conspicuous in his *Sinai and Palestine* (1856), the fruit of a tour in Egypt and the Holy Land.

DEAN STANLEY (1815–1881).

In 1856 he returned to Oxford as Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History, and delivered his *Lectures on the Eastern Church* (1861), in which he revived the scenes of early Church history with all his power of imagination and personal knowledge of the East, and treated the controversies agitated at the great councils with that fearless spirit of independence which marked his whole career as a leader of the Broad Church party. Another fruit of his professorship were his no less interesting *Lectures on the Jewish Church* (1863–76). In 1864 he was appointed to the deanery of Westminster; and, while the mention of much that made him honourably conspicuous in that office would be out of place here, it is right to notice the wide sympathy with literature and science which he showed on the occasion of the funerals of such men as Grote, Herschel, and others, and the zeal for his Minster and its historical associations displayed in his *Historical Memorials of Westminster Abbey* (1868; with a supplement, 1869). To these works are to be added a *Commentary on the Epistles to the Corinthians* (1855), and many sermons, lectures, and articles in reviews and magazines on subjects which proved the comprehensive range of his sympathies. He died on the 18th of July, 1881, and was followed to his grave in Henry VII's Chapel by a concourse which attested the love and admiration felt for him by men of all sects and all parties.

§ 16. Few of our great theologians in the present century have come from Scotland, and few Nonconformists have obtained a great name in theological literature, although many justly have enjoyed some popular celebrity. THOMAS CHALMERS, the head of a religious movement in Scotland as important as the Oxford movement in England, although utterly different from it in character, is an exception to both these rules. He was born at Anstruther in Fife, and was educated for the Scottish Church at St. Andrews University. In 1803 he became minister at Kilmeny, and in 1815 was transferred to the Tron Church at Glasgow. In 1823 he was appointed Professor of Moral Philosophy at St. Andrews, and in 1828 Professor of Theology at Edinburgh. In 1843 he headed the secession from the Established Church, and remained the most eminent of the Free Church ministers until his death in 1847. In the pulpit he reigned supreme. Although his manner was rough and his accent broadly Scotch, his thorough *abandon* and impassioned earnestness overcame these drawbacks and helped him to thrill his audience with something of the emotion which possessed himself. His writings embrace a great variety of subjects, and all are treated ably by his capacious intellect; but he was not the leader of a school. He established no great principle. He added nothing to divinity, science, or philosophy. He was simply the brightest star among contemporary Scottish divines. His style was incorrect and sometimes awkward, but its occasional grandeur bears away the most fastidious critic. He never let go his subject, but gripped it, held it fast, and turned it this side and that, holding it up in every light, adorning it with every fancy and illustration. He may be read but little to-day, but his writings will survive much that is ephemeral both in philosophy and theology.

THOMAS CHALMERS (1780–1847).

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

HISTORIANS, &c.

SIR ARCHIBALD ALISON (1792-1867) although of Scottish parentage and education, happened to be born at Kenley in Shropshire, where his father, the Rev. Archibald Alison, author of an *Essay on Taste* (1790), was vicar. Joining the Scots bar in 1814, he won a name, and eventually was appointed Sheriff of Lanarkshire. From early manhood Alison wrote much on financial matters, the currency, and population. He was a steady contributor to *Blackwood*, and wrote for it some articles which grew into a *Life of Marlborough* (1852). But long before this was published he had established his name as an historian by his voluminous *History of Europe* from 1789 to 1815, on which he had been engaged for thirteen years (1829–42). Notwithstanding its bulk and costliness this work, whose first volumes were published in 1833, reached a sixth edition in 1844, and continued for years to have an immense sale, finding, even in America, hundreds of thousands of readers, and an

unabated demand in Britain for close upon a generation. He thus was encouraged to carry his enterprise farther; and between 1852 and 1859 produced a continuation which brought his narrative down to Louis Napoleon's *coup d'état* in 1851. This enormous history was written with a twofold motive—to expose the dangerous character of an unchecked democracy, and to exhibit the active presence of controlling providence in human affairs. With all its many and glaring faults, it served its purpose in its generation, and, if it is now somewhat discarded, remains a striking monument of historical industry on rather unscientific lines. In 1861 *Lives of Lord Castlereagh and Sir Charles Stewart* proved the last fruits of a most industrious career.

JOHN SHERREN BREWER (1810–1879), a scholarly clergyman of considerable historical skill, who edited many of the state papers for the Master of the Rolls, produced, in the form of prefaces to his chief work in this department, a priceless history of the first part of Henry VIII's reign (1854), and also did valuable work on *The Student's Hume.*

HENRY THOMAS BUCKLE (1821–1862) is a possibly singular instance of a vigorous thinker and historian, of boundless reading, whose mind received little or no formal training in youth. The only and delicate son of a rich London family, he was brought up almost entirely at home and without a tutor, having no other reading than the Bible, Shakespeare, Bunyan, and the Arabian Nights. When he was nineteen he travelled for a year, learning languages with miraculous rapidity and stocking a most capacious memory with various knowledge. On returning home he gave up the business intended for him, surrounded himself with books, and became an advanced radical and freethinker. He remained unknown until the publication of the first volume of his *History of Civilisation in England* (1857), when he at once became a man of mark. The book roused much controversy and more antagonism than approbation. But the interest which it excited did not decline; new editions were called for; the second volume (1861) was read as widely as the first, and with the same effect; and, through the next twenty years, the demand for the whole work did not flag. Subsequently, however, its popularity waned and practically is dead to-day. Buckle's treatment of history was superficially scientific; his spirit and methods were stiffly utilitarian. The portion written is but the fragment of an introduction, whose aim is the discovery of the fundamental laws of European thought, with a view to their application to English intellectual history. It is distinguished by the emphasis of its opinions, its bitterness of party spirit, and its parade of doubtfully universal knowledge. Buckle's death, of fever at Damascus, was an unhappy result of his insatiable love of travel.

JOHN HILL BURTON (1809–1881), born at Aberdeen, was the son of an army lieutenant who had married a Scotchwoman. His father died early, and his boyhood and manhood were something of a struggle, in which he was helped by his own dogged perseverance and his mother's devotion. Eventually he became a member of the Scots bar and took to historical work, writing also with some success on legal and economical subjects. His first books were biographies—*David Hume* in 1846, *Lord Lovat* and *Duncan Forbes of Culloden* in 1847. In 1853 he published a *History of Scotland* from 1688 to 1745, which became the nucleus of his greatest undertaking, a complete *History of Scotland* from Agricola's invasion. This, finished in 1870, forms his chief claim to the gratitude of historical students. It is constructed inartistically and is almost devoid of literary merit; but Burton was an honest student, and his work, substantially accurate and fairly exhaustive, was, in spite of its formal unattractiveness, a wonderfully engaging story of his country's history for seventeen hundred years. Long before this his appointment as Secretary of the

Prisons Board, and, later on, as Historiographer Royal, lifted him above the necessity of writing for his bread. Yet his pen was not laid aside, and, during the later part of his life, he wrote two books which give him some claim to be considered a man of letters, *The Book-Hunter* (1860) and *The Scot Abroad* (1862)—both extensions of papers written for *Blackwood*. His latest effort, *A History of the Reign of Queen Anne* (1880), is a monument of decaying powers only.

WILLIAM COXE (1747–1828), Archdeacon of Wilts, although belonging to the eighteenth rather than the nineteenth century, was a painstaking historian whose work, dull and featureless in style, shows a more scientific appreciation of history than was usual in his time. His *Memoirs of the House of Austria* (1807), of *The Kings of Spain of the House of Bourbon* (1813), *The Duke of Marlborough* (1818–19), and *Sir Robert Walpole* (1798), may still be read with advantage. JAMES GRANT DUFF (1789–1858), in his *History of the Mahrattas* (1826), and MOUNTSTUART ELPHINSTONE (1779–1859), in his *History of India* till 1761, published in 1841, and his posthumous *Rise of the British Power in the East* (1887), without any special literary talent, made solid additions to the history of our Indian Empire. With these we may mention SIR JOHN WILLIAM KAYE'S (1814–1876) *Afghan War* (1851) and *Sepoy War* (1857–8), and the *History of India* (1863–7), by JOHN CLARK MARSHMAN (1794–1877).

JOHN FORSTER (1812–1876) was the son of a cattle-dealer at Newcastle-on-Tyne. Having shown some precocity he was sent, when only sixteen, to London, studied law at University College, and in time was called to the bar. But journalism and literature took up most of his energy from the first. He was for several years editor successively of *The Daily News* and *The Examiner*; and, although later in life a well-paid official of the Lunacy Commission, he was all through an indefatigable biographer, historian, and literary essayist. His ardent sympathy with political Puritanism led him to produce, between 1836 and 1839, his five volumes of *Lives of the Statesmen of the Commonwealth* for the "Cabinet Cyclopædia." His *Life of Goldsmith* (1848), which originally appeared in one volume, after having been written twelve times, and, in 1854, was expanded into two, is still the most authoritative, as it is one of the most delightful works on its subject. Two volumes of *Historical and Biographical Essays* (1858), containing excellent appreciations of Defoe, Steele, Foote, and Churchill, were republished from the *Edinburgh* and the *Quarterly*. Returning to his old love, the Commonwealth period, he produced, in 1860, two monographs of some pretensions, *The Arrest of the Five Members* and *The Debates on the Grand Remonstrance*, and, in 1864, a *Life of Sir John Eliot* in two volumes. These books, with much knowledge of their subject, are defaced by partisanship and inaccuracy, and require cautious use. Two volumes of a *Life of Landor* (1869) and three of a *Life of Dickens* (1872–4) complete the sum of Forster's finished work. As the work of an intimate friend, they are standard authorities on their subject. His last enterprise, a *Life of Swift* (1876), was interrupted by death, and only a single volume was issued. The fragment is inferior in literary merit to his *Goldsmith* alone.

JOHN GILLIES (1747–1836) was born at Brechin in Forfarshire, and was Robertson's successor as Historiographer Royal for Scotland. He published several now obsolete historical works, of which his *History of Greece* (1786) is the best known.

EDWIN GUEST (1800–1880), long Master of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, earned the applause and gratitude of our foremost historical scholars by a succession of searching and luminous papers on English historical antiquities, which were posthumously collected and published under the title of *Origines Celticæ* (1883). His fame was originally due to his earliest book, a *History of English Rhythms* (1838).

WALTER FARQUHAR HOOK (1798–1875) was the son of a dean of Worcester and a nephew of Theodore Hook the wit. As a parish priest at Coventry and as vicar of Leeds, where he remained for twenty-two years, he rose to a well-earned celebrity, while he became known at the same time for his admirable preaching and steadfast defence of the continuity of the Anglican Church. Many of his sermons were printed and widely read. In 1859 he became dean of Chichester, and devoted the later part of his life to his great work, *The Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury*. The first volume came out in 1860, and the eleventh was sent to the press a week before Dr. Hook's death. It is substantially an ecclesiastical history of England from St. Augustine to Juxon (597–1663) in which the essential identity of the earliest with the latest form of the Anglican Church is asserted very convincingly, although without great scholarship.

JOHN HOSACK (d. 1887) was a Scottish lawyer and legal writer who, towards the end of his life, became a London police magistrate. His *Mary Queen of Scots, and her Accusers* (1869–74), forms the fullest and most effective pleading extant in defence of her much-discussed reputation.

JOHN MITCHELL KEMBLE (1807–1857) was a son of Charles Kemble the actor, and therefore a nephew of the more illustrious John Philip Kemble and of Mrs. Siddons. At Trinity College, Cambridge, he gained Tennyson's friendship and the distinction of a sonnet—*To J. M. K.*—from the young poet. From the destiny, however, marked out for him there he turned away, and plunged into the study of early English history and Anglo-Saxon. These formed the staple of his life's work. His researches opened the way to a more enlightened and scientific study of the early period of our history; and by his *Codex Diplomaticus Ævi Saxonici* (1839-48) he laid scholars, as by his *Saxons in England* (1849) he laid all historical students, under the heaviest obligations. Subsequent research has detracted somewhat from the reputation of the second, but its value is still great.

ALEXANDER WILLIAM KINGLAKE (1809–1891) came of a banking family at Taunton. He was educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, was called to the bar in 1837, and even obtained some practice. His tour in the East (1835) was recorded in the famous *Eothen* (1844), one of the cleverest and liveliest books of travel ever written—a diary of impressions and various emotions which seeks, and with rare success, to be only entertaining. Always delighting in military history, he took care to be present during the Crimean War, and, by a fall from his pony at the battle of the Alma, became known to Lord Raglan. At Lady Raglan's request he afterwards undertook to narrate the history of the war down to her husband's death. Kinglake executed his task in eight stout volumes, of which the first two appeared in 1863, the last two in 1887. *The History of the Invasion of the Crimea* is perhaps the most detailed account of an historical event ever given, and certainly the best military narrative ever attempted by a civilian. Against its obvious faults it can place vividness of description, brilliant and polished style, minute diligence in disengaging fact, and a high spirit of patriotism.

JOHN LINGARD (1771–1851), born at Winchester, was a member of the Church of Rome and a professor, from 1794 to 1811, at the college which, expelled from Douay at the Revolution, found its eventual refuge at Ushaw, near Durham. His principal work was a *History of England* (1819–30) from the earliest times to 1688. He also wrote *Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church* (1806). Although his history is a valuable addition to historical literature, Lingard allowed his religious opinions to get the better of his impartiality and slightly to warp his judgment.

PHILIP HENRY, LORD MAHON and EARL STANHOPE (1805–1875) is known to the world chiefly through Macaulay's essay on his *History of*

the War of the Succession in Spain (1832). This was succeeded, between 1836 and 1853, by a *History of England from the Peace of Utrecht to the Peace of Versailles*, which is still our most satisfactory general account of the period. Long afterwards he added the necessary link of connection between this and Macaulay's great work by prefixing to it *The Reign of Anne* (1870), which subsequently was incorporated with the earlier volume. Mr. Lecky, in the preface to his own book on the same period, has done justice to Lord Mahon's previous work. Among other historical works by this excellent and too little known historian the best are the *Life of William Pitt* (1861–2) and the *Miscellanies* (1863 and 1872). His earliest work, written in his undergraduate days at Oxford, was a *Life of Belisarius* (1829). Among the historians of the second class, Lord Stanhope occupies a very honourable place.

SIR THOMAS ERSKINE MAY (1815–1886), eventually Clerk of the Commons and Lord Farnborough, published between 1861 and 1863 a still unsupplanted *Constitutional History of England* since 1760, and in 1877 a less valuable book on *Democracy in Europe*.

THOMAS M'CRIE (1772–1835), known, from a phrase of Hallam's, as the "Protestant Hildebrand," wrote a *Life of Knox* (1812) and *Life of Andrew Melville* (1819), very famous in their day and still remaining among the authorities on their subject. His attack on Scott, after the publication of *Old Mortality*, was a circumstance somewhat unfortunate for his fame.

CHARLES MERIVALE (1808–1894), fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, and dean of Ely, followed in the footsteps of the historians who had taken Greek and Roman history for their province some years earlier. His *History of the Romans under the Empire* (1850–62) is a monumental work in several volumes. Without any noticeable grace of style, he had the gift of reviving ancient history for his readers; and his small *History of Rome* for schools, with his essay on *The Fall of the Roman Republic*, are noteworthy examples of this faculty.

HENRY HART MILMAN (1791–1868), dean of St. Paul's, was the youngest son of Sir Francis Milman, President of the Royal College of Physicians. He was born in London and educated at Eton and Brasenose College, Oxford, where he won the Newdigate with a poem on the Apollo Belvedere. While vicar of St. Mary's, Reading, he wrote a tragedy called *Fazio* (1815), which was acted without his consent at Bath and Covent Garden. This was followed by *Samor* (1818), a religious epic founded on the legendary history of Britain; a drama on *The Fall of Jerusalem* (1820), *The Martyr of Antioch* (1822), and two other dramatic poems. In 1821 he was appointed Professor of Poetry at Oxford, and his poems were collected and published in 1840. This poetic spirit is still to be traced in the vivid style of those historical works on which his reputation is founded. The first of these, a *History of the Jews* (1830), provoked some hostility by a freedom of criticism which would now be deemed moderate. In 1835 he was removed from Reading to St. Margaret's, Westminster, and in 1840 he published a *History of Christianity from the Birth of Christ to the Abolition of Paganism in the Roman Empire*. In 1849 he was appointed dean of St. Paul's, and his greatest work, the *History of Latin Christianity*, appeared in 1854 and 1855. He also edited Gibbon, with elaborate notes and essays (12 vols. 1838–9), and was re-edited by Sir W. Smith some years later; and brought out an illustrated edition of Horace (1849). He was a frequent contributor to the *Quarterly*. His interest in his great church, like that of Dean Stanley in Westminster, was proved by the *Annals of St. Paul's* (1868).

SIR WILLIAM NAPIER (1785–1860), born at Celbridge in County Kildare, was a distinguished officer in the Peninsular War and published a *History* (1828–40) of Wellington's Spanish campaigns, which is unquestionably the best military

history in English. He had a thorough knowledge of the art of war, had been present at many of the scenes which he describes, and, with a lively imagination and great command of language, brings the scenes vividly before the reader's mind. He also wrote a *History of the Conquest of Scinde* (1845), a *History of the Administration of Sir Charles Napier in Scinde* (1851), a *Life of Sir Charles Napier* (1857), and other works on military subjects.

SIR FRANCIS PALGRAVE (1788–1861), the leading forerunner of the Oxford school of historians, was at no University himself, but was the son of a London Jew called Cohen, and retained his name until his marriage in 1823. The first working years of his life were passed in a solicitor's office, but his taste for historical and kindred subjects even then asserted itself, especially in the editing of some Anglo-Norman verse (1818). Called to the bar in 1827, he soon took rank as an approved authority in pedigree cases. He published a short *History of the Anglo-Saxons* in 1831, and in 1832 issued his first great work, *The Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, which Freeman pronounced a "memorable book even beside its great successor," the monumental work of Bishop Stubbs. Palgrave was knighted the same year, and in 1838 was appointed Deputy-Keeper of the Public Records. He held this post till his death, publishing several ponderous volumes of historical materials still indispensable to the thorough student, and now and then publishing an original treatise of his own. In later life he entered on a scheme of writing "the whole medieval history of Anglo-Saxon, Anglo-Norman, Cymric, and English races and nations, but lived long enough to complete only four volumes of *The History of Normandy and England* (1851–64). This remarkable history has fallen into neglect, partly on account of its antiquarianism, pedantry, and looseness of style, but mainly because it has been superseded by Freeman's more satisfactory book on the same subject. Palgrave's literary strength lay rather in constitutional exposition than in narration, and his first great book therefore is in higher repute than his second—showing, as Freeman himself allowed, the "union of research, daring, and ingenuity."

EBEN WILLIAM ROBERTSON (1815–1874), a Scotsman living in England, published in 1862 two volumes of a work on *Scotland under her Early Kings*, and in 1872 a third of *Historical Essays*, which are both still rising in a deserved reputation.

SIR JOHN ROBERT SEELEY (1834–1895), Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, and Professor of Modern History at Cambridge from 1869 to his death, was more remarkable as a thinker and student than as a writer. His first work of any importance was his religious treatise, *Ecce Homo* (1865), which excited some admiration and controversy; this was to some extent supplemented by his *Natural Religion* (1882). His most extensive book was the not very attractive but very remarkable *Life and Times of Stein* (1878). *Lectures and Essays* (1870) contained some valuable work. His other historical works were the famous *Expansion of England* (1883), the *Short Life of Napoleon* (1886), and *The Growth of British Policy*, posthumously published in 1895.

JAMES SPEDDING (1810–1881), the "J. S." of Tennyson's early verse and the prince of historical specialists, exhausted, in his seven volumes of *The Letters and the Life of Francis Bacon* (1861–74), and two other volumes of Baconian apologetics, a subject that might be thought incapable of exhaustion, and helped to edit Bacon's works in seven volumes more.

SIR JAMES STEPHEN (1789–1859), under-secretary of state for the colonies and a constant writer for *The Edinburgh Review*, is well known as the author of the admirable *Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography* (1849) and the *Lectures on the History of France* (1852). These lectures were delivered by him as Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge. He was appointed to his chair in 1849, and held it till his death.

SIR WILLIAM STIRLING-MAXWELL (1818–1878), son of Archibald Stirling of Keir and Cawder, was educated at a private school and at Trinity College, Cambridge. He became well known as a Spanish scholar, and published several excellent books on Spanish history. The best of these was his *Cloister Life of the Emperor Charles V* (1852), a most picturesquely written book which ran into several editions. More elaborate than this were his *Annals of the Artists of Spain* (3 vols. 1848) and his incomplete *Don John of Austria* (1883), posthumously published in two volumes.

AGNES STRICKLAND (1796–1874), a lady of Suffolk birth, wrote, in conjunction with her sister, *The Lives of the Queens of England since the Norman Conquest* (1840–48), a work of great industry, much prejudice, and little insight, which still finds admiring readers. It was followed by *The Lives of the Queens of Scotland, etc.* (1850–9), and *The Lives of our Bachelor Kings* (1861).

SHARON TURNER (1768–1847), a solicitor in London, wrote a *History of the Anglo-Saxons* (1799–1805), on which his reputation chiefly rests. He continued the history of England down to the death of Elizabeth (1814–23), and published a *Sacred History of the World* (1832). Although the possessor of no great historical capacity, he was yet one of our first really scientific historians.

PATRICK FRASER TYTLER (1791–1849) was born at Edinburgh and was the son of ALEXANDER FRASER TYTLER, LORD WOODHOUSELEE (1747–1813), the author of the popular *Elements of General History* (1801). Patrick Tytler wrote a *History of Scotland* (1828–43), which is unquestionably the best in English, surpassing Burton's work in its command of form and finer literary sense.

PHILOSOPHERS.

JOHN AUSTIN (1790–1859), Professor of Jurisprudence in University College, London, has excited considerable attention by his essays on behalf of utilitarianism. He was a very cultured and well-educated lawyer, and wrote comparatively little. His professorial lectures were published under the title of *The Province of Jurisprudence Determined* (1832). He married Miss Sarah Taylor of Norwich, a member of a celebrated family, and famous herself as a translator from the German. After her husband's death she published his *Essays in Jurisprudence* (1863).

THOMAS SPENCER BAYNES (1823–1887) deserves mention here, not merely as a prominent member of the Hamiltonian school of philosophy, but as the editor of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* in its present form.

WILLIAM ARCHER BUTLER (1814?–1848), Professor of Moral Philosophy at Dublin, published a valuable series of *Lectures on the History of Ancient Philosophy* (1856), which might have been developed with advantage into a much larger book. By the general consent of critics the volume is the best existing manual on the subject, but its publication was posthumous, and its form is necessarily fragmentary.

WILLIAM KINGDON CLIFFORD (1845–1879), Professor of applied Mathematics at University College, London, gained some distinction as a philosopher and agnostic thinker of the fighting type. His metaphysical work was distinguished by great originality and genius, but he did not live long enough to overcome the faults of immaturity and of personal dogmatism where he was most opposed to dogma.

JAMES FREDERICK FERRIER (1808–1864), Professor, first of History at Edinburgh, then of Moral Philosophy at St. Andrews, was a nephew of Miss Ferrier the novelist and son-in-law to "Christopher North." His chief work was the *Institutes of Metaphysic* (1854), in which Ferrier shows himself a disciple of Hamilton. His own originality of thought makes him worthy of separate mention.

THOMAS HILL GREEN (1836–1882), an indolent and backward boy at Rugby, developed great intellectual activity at Oxford, took a

first-class in classics, and in 1860 was elected to a fellowship at Balliol. He became an active propagandist, both in the city and University, of a tolerably practical form of Liberalism; and, as tutor of Balliol, exercised a tremendous influence, religious and philosophical, over the undergraduates with whom he was brought into contact. His philosophy, derived, generally speaking, from Kant and Hegel, drew most of its power and component elements from his own intellect and spirit, which was in decided antagonism to the empirical doctrines then prevalent. Till 1874 he was known outside Oxford only by an occasional article in a review; but in that year his introductory essays to a new edition of Hume brought him into more general note, and his position was still further strengthened by a succession of papers on Lewes and Herbert Spencer, contributed to *The Contemporary Review*. In 1878 he was appointed Whyte Professor of Moral Philosophy. The bulk of his lectures was published after his death in a volume called *Prolegomena to Ethics* (1883), on which his reputation chiefly rests. Perhaps his two lay sermons, *The Witness of God* and *Faith*, both also posthumous (1888), are as effective examples of his special power as an ordinary enquirer need desire.

GEORGE HENRY LEWES (1817–1878), known in literary history chiefly as the friend of George Eliot and as a very clever journalist and reviewer, wrote, with some care and command of literary expression, a *Biographical History of Philosophy* (1845–6), in four copious volumes. Lewes' work forms an excellent general handbook to the subject for readers who do not like their philosophy in too heavy doses.

SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH (1765–1832) was born at Aldourie in Inverness-shire, and was educated at the Universities of Aberdeen and Edinburgh. He intended to enter the medical profession, but soon abandoned the idea and maintained himself by literature in London. In 1791 he answered Burke's ferocious arraignment of the French Revolution with a book called *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, which made his reputation. In 1795 he was called to the bar, and, four years later, delivered in the hall of Lincoln's Inn his brilliant lectures *On the Law of Nature and Nations*. He rose rapidly at the bar, and his speech in defence of Peltier, who had been prosecuted for a libel on Bonaparte, then First Consul, placed him among the great orators of the age. In 1803 he was appointed Recorder of Bombay. After spending seven years in India he returned to England, entered Parliament, and, towards the end of his life, became a Privy Councillor and Commissioner of the Board of Control. He died on May 30, 1832. His principal works are, a *Dissertation on Ethical Philosophy* (1830), prefixed to the seventh edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*; three volumes of a *History of England* (1830); a *Life of Sir Thomas More* (1830) in Lardner's "Cabinet Cyclopædia"; and a fragment (1834) of a *History of the Revolution of* 1688. Mackintosh wrote gracefully, but neither in philosophy nor history was he more than a brilliant amateur.

THOMAS ROBERT MALTHUS (1766–1834), a clergyman whose remains rest in Bath Abbey, became disagreeably and rather unjustly notorious as the author of a bulky *Essay on the Principles of Population* (1798). His work has exercised, however, more than a temporary influence. He was, for the last nineteen years of his life, Professor of Political Economy at Haileybury College.

JAMES MILL (1773–1836), the famous father of an illustrious son, was born at a small Forfarshire village and rose to eminence as a journalist, writing for most of the leading periodicals. His *History of British India* (1817–18), very impartially written, gained him a place in the India House. His *Analysis of the Mind* (1829), is a very useful contribution to mental science; it did much to illustrate the principle of association as one of the first general laws of mind, and is still a landmark in the history of English philosophy.

SIR JAMES FITZJAMES STEPHEN

(1829–1894), educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, was the son of the well-known historian, Sir James Stephen. He wrote on various subjects, historical and philosophical, his chief work being *The Story of Nuncomar* (1885). Of his other works, the best known is *Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity* (1873). He was a celebrated journalist, and worked for *The Saturday Review*, among other periodicals. An authority in jurisprudence, he became one of her Majesty's judges, retaining his post till not long before his death.

THEOLOGIANS.

JOHN WILLIAM BURGON (1819–1888), elected fellow of Oriel College, Oxford, in 1848, was vicar of the University Church for thirteen years, and dean of Chichester for twelve. As a poet he lives in a single couplet:—

"Match me such wonder save in eastern clime,
A rose-red city, half as old as Time."

As a scholar he is remembered by his incisive criticisms on the revision of the New Testament, *The Revision Revised* (1883), reprinted from *The Quarterly Review*; as a divine, by a lengthy file of productions, of which *Inspiration and Interpretation*, *Treatises on the Pastoral Office*, and a vindication of *The Athanasian Creed*, are the chief. At the very end of his life he brought out a work of abiding interest in *The Lives of Twelve Good Men* (1888). Dean Burgon was a High Churchman of a sound and philosophical type, not unlike his great predecessor at Chichester, Dr. Hook.

JOHN FOSTER (1770–1843), a Baptist minister and a friend of the great preacher Robert Hall, was one of the principal Nonconformist theologians during the first half of the nineteenth century. He was never celebrated as a preacher, but his writings, in the form of literary and religious essays, have considerable beauty of style. His eloquence was less than Hall's, but his intellectual vigour was greater. His *Essays* were published in 1805.

RICHARD HURRELL FROUDE (1803–1836) held a place among the men of the Oxford movement not unlike that which John Sterling filled among his friends. He was the son of Archdeacon Froude of Dartington, near Totnes, and the elder brother of James Anthony Froude the historian. He became a pupil of Keble, and, as fellow of Oriel, was a frank and fearless apostle of his tutor's principles and an intimate friend of Newman. His enthusiasm certainly gave the movement its early energy; but his health unfortunately was weak, and he died while the great revolution was still in its infancy. He left behind him two volumes of *Remains* (1837) which illustrate the strength of his convictions and his absolute unreserve in expressing them. He wrote three of the Tracts, and was the β of *Lyra Apostolica* (1836).

ROBERT HALL (1764–1831) was the son of a Baptist minister at Arnesby in Leicestershire. After studying, first at a dissenting academy at Bristol, and afterwards at Aberdeen, he himself became a Baptist minister, preaching successively at Bristol, Cambridge, and Leicester, and finally at Bristol a second time, where he died. As a preacher, his fame among Baptists has been dimmed by the subsequent eloquence of Mr. Spurgeon; but, in his own day, he made a great reputation. He had good style and a fair amount of rather superficial scholarship.

EDWARD IRVING (1792–1834) is famous, not only as the founder of a strange sect of Christians and as the early friend of the Carlyles, but as one of the greatest of nineteenth-century preachers, and as a preacher whose sermons had real literary distinction. Irving was no mere charlatan, employing sensational methods to win popularity; he was an enthusiast, earnestly impressed with the duties of his calling. There was doubtless a slight tendency to insanity in him which culminated in the extraordinary "gift of tongues" at Port Glasgow and the foundation of the Catholic Apostolic Church, but this co-existed with a wonderful lucidity and strength of intellect.

HENRY PARRY LIDDON (1829–1890) was the most brilliant of the younger men who led the van of the Oxford movement after its early days. He was born in Hampshire, and was the son of a naval officer. Early in life he obtained a studentship which led to a senior studentship at Christ Church; soon after taking Holy Orders he became Vice-Principal of Cuddesdon Theological College, and then of St. Edmund's Hall, Oxford. Apart from his natural insight, his pulpit oratory was enough to make him a leader in his school of thought. He had been a writer of sermons since boyhood, and he now began to aim at reproducing the style and manner of the great French preachers in the English pulpit. His fame was fully established by his Bampton Lectures on *The Divinity of Our Lord* (1866), which subsequently reached many editions. His publications at this time were numerous and largely devotional. In 1870 he became a canon of St. Paul's and Ireland Professor of Exegesis at Oxford. He retained the first post till his death, but resigned the second in 1882. Volumes of sermons now came from him thick and fast, all rich in impressive eloquence, most of them original and forcible in thought, and some marked by incisive wit and sarcasm. His two series of *Sermons before the University of Oxford* (1865 and 1879), his Lent lectures on *Some Elements of Religion* (1872), his *Thoughts on Present Church Troubles*, his three volumes of *Easter, Advent, and Christmastide in St. Paul's* (1885–8–9), are adequate embodiments of the peculiar power which Liddon possessed—a power which has left a distinct mark on English ecclesiastical thought. The ecclesiastical spirit was unusually strong in him, and he easily swayed vast congregations with his striking figure and imposing oratory; while the personal beauty and devotion of his character drew round him a band of by no means sentimental admirers. His *Life of Dr. Pusey*, which was approaching completion at the time of his death, and is interesting as a memorial raised by one devoted friend to another, was published posthumously; but, as a biography, it lacks literary coherence of form, and might have been much shorter with advantage.

JOSEPH BARBER LIGHTFOOT (1828–1889) revived in the present age the best traditions of Christian apologetics, with a singular union of scholarship and piety. He was the son of a Liverpool accountant and finished his undergraduate period at Trinity College, Cambridge, with a first-class in the Classical Tripos and as thirtieth wrangler. Elected fellow of Trinity in 1852, he was ordained in 1854, and continued to reside at Cambridge, pursuing his studies in classical and early Christian literature. An untiring contributor to several learned periodicals, he first showed his critical faculty in laying bare the deficiency of contemporary commentaries on St. Paul's epistles. In 1861 he was made Hulsean Professor at Cambridge, in 1871 he was appointed to a residentiary stall in St. Paul's, and in 1875 to the Lady Margaret Professorship. Meanwhile, he had begun to demolish, in his *Essays on Supernatural Religion* (collected in 1889), the arguments of an anonymous volume which sought to cast doubts on revealed truth. As Hulsean Professor, too, he had kindled in his audience an intense theological enthusiasm, and, by his mere example, had become the founder of a new school of theological enquirers. His own contributions to the science were the noble commentaries on the *Epistles to the Galatians, Philippians, and Colossians* (1865, 1868, 1875), which are the work, not only of a scholar, but of a divine and—as the introductions and excursuses testify—a man of letters. In 1879 he was raised to the see of Durham, and proved himself as great a bishop as he was a teacher. Lightfoot was the most consummate master, in these later days, of biblical and patristic learning, on the side of criticism as well as of positive fact, and of post-biblical Christian literature and history as well. His editions, therefore, of *The Epistle of Clement of Rome*

(1869) and *The Apostolic Fathers* (1885), form, perhaps, the weightiest part of his greater work. But his various charges, addresses, sermons, and miscellaneous papers are also abundant and valuable.

FREDERICK DENISON MAURICE (1805–1872), a great spiritual and intellectual influence, was the child of Unitarian parents who migrated in his boyhood from Suffolk to the neighbourhood of Bristol. His early manhood was passed between Oxford, Cambridge, and London in study and in literary employment upon *The Athenæum* and another literary periodical. Under Coleridge's influence he joined the Anglican Church and received her Orders in 1834. At first he went to a country curacy, from which he returned to London as chaplain successively to Guy's Hospital and Lincoln's Inn; finally, he was incumbent of St. Peter's, Vere Street. But he varied the duties of his office with other occupations. He was at one time or other an educational editor, a Professor of English Literature and Theology at King's College, London, and of Moral Philosophy at Cambridge. He lectured frequently. He took an interest and showed himself indefatigable in the founding of colleges in London. He was an eager and subtle controversialist, an ardent apostle of social and theological tenets which, regarded with dislike and dread by most of his class, yet exercised a great influence, not lost to-day, over certain minds. So stirring a spirit as his naturally became a centre of conflict both in the Church and the world, but his profound sense of the supernatural and personal devotion of character won him the respect even of his opponents. He certainly did more than anyone else to widen the horizon of English theological thought, to broaden the basis of the Anglican Church, and to communicate knowledge and intellectual advantages to those classes out of whose reach these things usually lie. In number and variety of sort and size his publications were unique of their kind, and to select is not easy. Among the most popular may be reckoned *The Patriarchs and Lawgivers of the Old Testament* (1851), *The Gospel of St. John* (1857), and *Social Morality* (1869); while the *Theological Essays* (1853), *The Kingdom of Christ* (1838), *Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy* (1871–2), and certain volumes of sermons, would seem to have exercised the strongest influence. Maurice had a singularly attractive character, and made many disciples in whom his principles still live and work. Yet the very "pure and fine spirit" of the man led him into a hazy idealism and an uncertainty of terminology which has done perhaps even more in the direction of theological unsoundness than of breadth of opinion.

JAMES BOWLING MOZLEY (1813–1878), whom Dean Church declared to have been, "after Mr. Newman, the most forcible and impressive of the Oxford writers," is an adequate representative of the more cautious side of the Oxford movement. His wife was a sister of Newman. Educated at Oriel, and elected to a Magdalen fellowship in 1837, he became an active and resolute worker in the cause, especially after his illustrious brother-in-law's secession. Some think that it was his courage and intellectual power which repaired, more than all else, that disaster to the Anglican communion. When, in 1844, *The Christian Remembrancer* took the place of *The British Critic* as the organ of Tractarianism, it had no more able contributor. In 1856 Mozley left Oxford for a country parish, and in 1869 became a canon of Worcester. But in 1871 he was appointed to the Regius Professorship of Divinity, which he held till his death. He was a fearless and powerful writer and preacher, of profound learning and trenchant vigour of thought, with a weighty and finished style. His chief works are *The Augustinian Doctrine of Predestination* (1855), the Bampton Lectures on *Miracles* (1865), *University Sermons* (1876), *Ruling Ideas in Early Ages, etc.* (1877), together with several scattered papers which were collected after his death into *Essays, Historical and Theological*. His brother

THOMAS MOZLEY (1806–1893), from 1868 to 1880 vicar of Plymtree in Devon, and a writer for *The Times*, has gained no little distinction in connection with the same movement by his *Reminiscences of Oriel and the Oxford Movement* (1882), which give a lively and authentic account of it. His *Letters from Rome* (1891), as special correspondent to *The Times* in 1869 and 1870, are equally valuable as history.

JAMES CRAIGIE ROBERTSON (1813–1882), born at Aberdeen and educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, was vicar of Bekesbourne in Kent from 1846 to 1859, when he was appointed canon of Canterbury. He wrote several learned works, of which the best known is the *History of the Christian Church to the Reformation* (4 vols. 1852–73). His *Becket, a Biography* (1869) is a calm and rational work on a very contentious subject.

FREDERICK WILLIAM ROBERTSON (1816–1853) of Brighton enjoys a reputation which, large as it still continues to be, is yet wholly posthumous. He was the son of a military officer and had many plans of work before leaving Oxford and taking Holy Orders. He worked, first at Cheltenham, then in London, and, for the last six years of his life, at Trinity Chapel, Brighton, often much distressed in mind and afflicted by disease and physical pain. His early death was little noticed, and his name might have perished had not his friends, a year or two after his death, published a volume of sermons which made a great impression. More were demanded, and two other volumes, gathered from his papers, had a like reception. In a year or two Robertson's name was a power in America as well as in England, and his Remains were even translated into several foreign languages. His depth of thought and grasp of spiritual things were both extraordinary, but he suffered from something of the same uncertainty and haziness of opinion as F. D. Maurice. He is an enquirer rather than a teacher with authority.

WILLIAM ROBERTSON SMITH (1846–1894), fellow of Christ's and Regius Professor of Arabic at Cambridge, was an Aberdeenshire man, and, until his opinions led to his expulsion, Professor of Hebrew in the Free Church College of Aberdeen. He did much critical work before his premature death, his chief essays being on *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia* and *The Religion of the Semites*.

RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH (1807–1886), born in Dublin and educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was in residence with Tennyson and was a prominent member of the "Apostles" club, was a poet and theologian of some natural—but many more acquired—gifts and accomplishments. He was not long in Holy Orders before he published a volume of verse called *Justin Martyr and other Poems* (1835), which was so favourably received that he was encouraged to follow it up with further attempts. These, however, did not maintain the success of the first. Trench had been a country rector for twelve years and a theological professor at King's College, London, for eight, when he was preferred, in 1856, to the deanery of Westminster. In 1863 he was designated Archbishop of Dublin. He had already written a good deal beside his poetry, and his *Notes on the Parables* (1841) and *Notes on the Miracles* (1846) had already become recognised text-books on their subjects, whilst his lectures on *The Study of Words* (1851), *English, Past and Present* (1855), and his *Select Glossary* (1859), proved an effectual stimulus to a method of study that has gone on increasing ever since. All these books, except the last, ran through an unprecedented number of editions, and are in use still. At Westminster and Dublin Trench continued to write copiously, but few of his later productions are worthy of mark save *Proverbs and their Lessons* (1863), *Synonyms of the New Testament* (1865), and *Lectures on Medieval Church History* (1877). Whether as poet, theologian, or historian, Trench showed powers that were receptive

and reproductive rather than original; but his very wide culture and his sensibility to the finer emotions made his work a popular vehicle of instruction and more useful to the general reader than much abstruse work of more original genius would be.

JOHN TULLOCH (1823–1886), principal for thirty-two years of the theological college in St. Andrews University, was a theological writer of wide learning, intelligence, and moderation. His *Leaders of the Reformation* (1859) and *English Puritanism and its Leaders* (1861) deserve mention; but his two volumes on *Rational Theology and Christian Philosophy in England in the Seventeenth Century* (1872) reach a much higher level and form an almost monumental work. Even Matthew Arnold gave the book great praise. His *Movements of Religious Thought* (1885) is also instructive and interesting, although slight and defective when compared with its predecessor.

WILLIAM GEORGE WARD (1812–1882), a very able, though not a very lucid writer, created a great sensation in the early days of the Oxford Movement by his *Ideal of a Christian Church* (1844). The book was condemned by the Oxford Senate, and Ward left the Anglican for the Roman communion, in which he continued a steadfast layman until his death.

CHRISTOPHER WORDSWORTH (1807–1885), son of the Master of Trinity and nephew of the poet, was a fellow of Trinity, Head-master of Harrow, and Bishop of Lincoln. One of the great prelates of the century, he was also a scholar and theologian, and wrote copiously on classical and theological subjects. His great work was his *Commentary on the Bible* (1856–70), a book full of scholarly citation and deep spiritual insight.

SCHOLARS.

JOHN CONINGTON (1825–1869), the son of a Lincolnshire clergyman, educated at Rugby, and a fellow of University College, Oxford, became Professor of Latin in 1854. His taste and scholarship are clearly seen in his edition of Virgil, or, as he chose to call him, Vergil. As a translator, his *Odes of Horace* (1863) and the *Æneid* (1866)—the second in the metre and manner of Scott—deserve attention, while in his *Miscellanies*, published after his death, much matter of general interest is to be found, including an essay on Pope which, according to Dr. Courthope, is a "model of sound and masculine criticism." His latest productions were a version, in Spenserian stanza, of the second twelve books of the *Iliad* (1868), and, in 1869, a translation of the remainder of Horace in Popian Alexandrines. This was the continuation of a work begun in 1865 by another Oxford scholar, PHILIP STANHOPE WORSLEY (1835–1866), whose early death blighted a promise at least equally fair. Worsley also translated half the *Odyssey* into the same metre (1861).

BENJAMIN JOWETT (1817–1894), Master of Balliol, had a marvellous influence on Oxford thought. He wrote little that was original himself—a commentary on the *Epistles to the Thessalonians* and a contribution to *Essays and Reviews* constitute the sum of his work. However, his very free translations of Plato and Thucydides are admirable specimens of their kind, and his personality, in addition, was a very prominent factor in the lives of all with whom he came immediately in contact. His influence was in the direction of a Broad Churchmanship that bordered perilously on a negation of faith, and, although so widespreading, is in some respects much to be regretted.

HUGH ANDREW JOHNSTONE MUNRO (1819–1885), fellow of Trinity and Latin Professor at Cambridge, was a scholar pure and simple, skilful in the art of writing Latin prose and verse, and a master of the minutest elements of his subject. His greatest work was an edition of *Lucretius* (1864) with an English translation.

MARK PATTISON (1813–1884) was an undergraduate at Oriel during the days of the Oxford movement, and, becoming a fellow of Lincoln

in 1839, attached himself to Newman and was on the point of following his leader into the Roman Church when the great crisis came. But he not only drew back at the last moment, but steadily drew away from Tractarianism altogether, and at length was caught by the critical and sceptical wave that next invaded the University. He showed a lively interest in educational questions, contributing a paper on the subject to the *Oxford Essays*, and another on *Religious Thought in the Last Century* to the famous *Essays and Reviews*. In 1861 he was chosen Rector of Lincoln. Henceforward he was known as a persistent advocate of disinterestedness in study. From time to time he wrote keen-witted reviews and addresses, and these were published after his death in a collected form, as well as a volume of sermons, and a curious and not always pleasant self-revelation called *Memoirs* (1885). He also wrote a little book on *Milton* (1879) for the "English Men of Letters" series. But his one masterly production, an object-lesson in the doctrine he preached and an example of its practice, was *The Life of Isaac Casaubon* (1875)—a great book which will always be cherished by an elect minority.

WILLIAM YOUNG SELLAR (1825–1890), Professor of Humanity in Edinburgh University, was a Balliol man and fellow of Oriel. His *Roman Poets of the Republic* (1863) was a literary contribution to the treasury of pure scholarship. It was succeeded by other volumes in continuation of his plan; these, however, excellent as they are, were not equal to the first volume, in which he was writing of his favourite authors. There could be no better instance of the alliance between learning and literature.

CHAPTER XXVI.

TENNYSON AND THE VICTORIAN POETS.

§ 1. The transitional period: THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES. § 2. THOMAS HOOD and WINTHROP MACKWORTH PRAED. § 3. ALFRED TENNYSON: early poetry. § 4. From 1842 to the *Idylls*. § 5. The *Idylls* and later poems. Summary. § 6. ROBERT BROWNING: poetry till 1846. § 7. Married life. The great monologues. *The Ring and the Book*. § 8. After *The Ring and the Book*. Summary. § 9. MRS. BROWNING. § 10. MATTHEW ARNOLD: poetry of youth and manhood. § 11. His prose. General features of his work. § 12. The Pre-Raffaellite movement: D. G. ROSSETTI. § 13. WILLIAM MORRIS and *The Earthly Paradise*. § 14. CHRISTINA ROSSETTI. § 15. ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH and the younger LORD LYTTON. § 16. General remarks.

§ 1. THE most interesting personality among the poets who conduct us from the great romantic age to the age of Tennyson, was the eccentric and rather obscure THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES, a nephew, through his mother, of Miss Edgeworth. His father had a large practice as a doctor in Clifton, and he himself, after a youth spent at Charterhouse and Pembroke College, Oxford, went abroad to study medicine. For the remainder of his life he stayed on the Continent, living in a very eccentric manner and producing a small quantity of poetry. There is very little doubt that, in the later years of his life, his sanity left him. The truth about his death will never be known, but its circumstances point to suicide. It is only to be expected that the work of so peculiar a man should wear a morbid complexion; and his unfinished medley, *Death's Jest-Book, or the Fool's Tragedy* (1850)—his earlier work is scanty and unimportant—is ghastly in subject and treatment. Beddoes, born in the midst of the romantic revival, was one of those people whose genius seems to take its colour from the air round them and to owe a debt to no concrete influence. The Elizabethan spirit of tragedy was natural to him, and the study of such sombre poets as Tourneur, who probably attracted him most, brought out his latent and kindred capacity. *Death's Jest-Book*, considered as a drama, is neither great nor pleasant, but it has merit far above the ordinary, which is easily discovered by comparing it with the

THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES (1803–1849).

Sir John Woodvil of so devout and instinctive an Elizabethan as Charles Lamb. The point, however, in which Beddoes stands pre-eminent among his contemporaries, is his use of the lyric. His work is studded with occasional songs which, with an Elizabethan purity and ease of style, have also a peculiar and haunting charm, like music heard in sleep. This gives his work a distinction which could hardly rest on a merely tragic foundation; moreover, in these songs we see the brighter, if still morbid, side of an art which is otherwise more unique than delightful. Had he written more, Beddoes probably would have succeeded in disappointing his admirers; as it is, the scantiness of his poetry serves to stimulate our curiosity.

THOMAS HOOD (1799–1845).

§ 2. THOMAS HOOD, unfortunately driven to make merry for a public which did not appreciate his better work, has the usual reputation of a purely comic writer. His father was a bookseller in the Poultry and, dying early, left his son to make his own living. After some time in a merchant's office and as an engraver's apprentice, Hood turned to journalism and, becoming assistant sub-editor of *The London Magazine*, associated himself with the "Cockney" school—Lamb, Hazlitt, etc. The *Odes and Addresses* (1825), written in collaboration with his friend Reynolds, and the *Whims and Oddities* (1826–7) earned for him a success with the general public which his serious poetry could never have secured. He at once became a popular writer; but in the midst of his success a firm failed and involved him in its losses. He did not seek the aid of the bankruptcy court; but, emulating Scott's example, determined to pay off the debt which he had involuntarily contracted. To do this he went to Germany, where he could live economically, and took up his abode at Coblenz in 1835. In 1837 he removed to Ostend, and returned to London in 1840. A year later he obtained the editorship of *The New Monthly Magazine*, which he kept till the end of 1843. 1844 was the birth-year of *Hood's Monthly*. A pension was procured for him, with reversion to his wife and daughter, in 1844; but he died of consumption in the spring of the following year.

Hood's characteristics.

Hood wrote charmingly, and his delicate fancy, which excelled in songs and pretty little lyrics, gives him a very conspicuous place among poets of the second class. Nor can anyone read even his confessedly comic work without seeing its pathetic side. Hood was a humorist of Charles Lamb's type, on whom personal sorrow left its mark, easily understood of every reader. He had a keen, almost sentimental, appreciation of natural beauty, which found its expression in many places of his work. Closely akin to this was his distinctive love of human nature, which endowed the English language with many poems showing the deepest sympathy with human life and character. The principal pieces of this kind, the famous *Bridge of Sighs* or *The Song of the Shirt*, although they are a little too sentimental and declamatory to

please the more fastidious order of readers, have, by their forcible appeal to pathos, obtained an immense popularity and are universally known. At first sight it is a little difficult to recognise these energetic poems of philanthropy as the fruits of a pen which also wrote the *Comic Annual* and *Miss Kilmansegg*; and, in his more tender and lyric moods, in which he rose at his best to that Elizabethan delicacy so obvious in the work of his friends and comrades, the identity is even harder to detect. But his own saying that "there's not a string attuned to mirth but has its chord in melancholy" goes far to explain the apparent discrepancy between his serious and comic work. As regards his sense of the odd and ridiculous, Hood was unsurpassed in his age. His puns are the great exception which proves the rule that this type of wit is execrable. At the same time he could write caustic satire without a shadow of coarseness or unnecessary suggestion in it. On the more pathetic side of his humour, we have said, he was apt to become sentimental and even a little intolerable; such poems as *The Deathbed* and *I remember* are of a melancholy which, in other hands, might be suspected as insincere, and is here carried much too far. And it is a relief to turn from these to the strenuous appeal of *The Bridge of Sighs* or the sound ballad-music of *Eugene Aram*. To look for Hood's finer and more ethereal work we must go to his more sustained and elaborate pieces, *The Plea of the Midsummer Fairies* or *Lycus the Centaur*. Hood's everyday poems show us the manysidedness of his humour. These pieces, with their richness of natural description, are the highest indication of what he could do as a poet.

Hood's chief contemporary in humorous writing was WINTHROP MACKWORTH PRAED, three years his junior. Praed came of good family. His father, Serjeant Praed, was a distinguished member of the bar. He was educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, showing an early talent for facetious writing. He was called to the bar, entered Parliament, and died at the early age of thirty-seven, while he was Secretary to the Board of Control. During his busy life he had cultivated his unusual genius for composing *vers de société*, and we may safely say that in this peculiar style he has no dangerous competitor. To compare his humour with Hood's is a vain task—the environment of both poets was so entirely different. Praed, in happy circumstances, could easily adopt the light tone of persiflage which he brought to its finest perfection. Such pieces as the *Letter of Advice* and a few others—Praed was not always so good—are little *chefs-d'œuvre*. On the other hand, the well-known *Red Fisherman* belongs to a different side of his humour, and shows the presence of a grotesque and imaginative faculty which is not always given to writers of polished society verse.

W. M. PRAED (1802-1839).

§ 3. Meanwhile, six years after Praed, the great poet of the later

nineteenth century had been born. ALFRED TENNYSON was the son of a Lincolnshire clergyman at Somersby, in the southern part of the Wolds. He was born on August 6, 1809, at his father's parsonage house, and the first nineteen years of his life were passed exclusively in his native county, at Somersby itself, and at Louth grammar school. The scenery of the Wolds had a life-long effect on his verse, and its influence on his early poems is very perceptible; while in later life he wrote several pieces in the dialect which he might have heard the farmers talking at Spilsby or Horncastle market. His liking for verse was obvious from his early childhood. Two of his elder brothers, Charles—whose entire life was passed in Lincolnshire—and Frederick, were also drawn towards poetry, and in their riper years produced minor verse not unworthy of their name. In 1827 Charles and Alfred found that they had written enough verse to fill a modest volume. As, like the authors of *Lyrical Ballads* a generation earlier, they were in want of a little money to cover the expenses of a projected tour, they sought, aided by their coachman's suggestions, to barter their verse for it. A Louth bookseller, with an optimism almost worthy of Cottle, gave them £20 for the copyright, and published the volume under the title of *Poems by Two Brothers*. The little book had nothing epoch-making about it, but the verse was respectable and contained the first blossoms of a poetical genius that, sixty-five years after, had not ceased to bear fruit. Which of the one hundred and two pieces thus published were written by Charles, or which were written by Alfred, is a matter of the merest guess-work, as the boys agreed never to tell. Neither reprinted a single one of these poems; only an occasional thought, image, or expression, was rescued by Alfred to reappear, more or less altered, in his later verse.

ALFRED TENNYSON (1809–1892).

In 1828 the brothers went to Trinity College, Cambridge. The ordinary routine of University life seems to have attracted Tennyson as little as any other great poet; he did not linger about Cambridge as Wordsworth had done, but went down summarily without taking his degree. But, if lectures and examinations played no part in the development of his genius, Cambridge itself impressed him with its "gray flats" and gardens and college chapels; and, in some of the finest stanzas of *In Memoriam*, he paid a vivid tribute to the place. More important than this was the influence of the society into which he was thrown. Shy, diffident, and sensitive, disliking the general habits of his contemporaries, he fortunately became the member of an intellectual set whose ideas and aspirations were far beyond those of most young men. As a member of the "Apostles" Club—an informal society of men who met in each other's rooms—he became the friend of Trench, Milnes, and Spedding, and more especially of Arthur Henry Hallam, two years

Tennyson at Cambridge.

younger than himself. Tennyson was liked by all and loved by several; but his intimacy with Hallam was the most important event of his early life, and, thanks to his deathless verse, is one of the memorable friendships of all time. He read his own poems to his friends, doubtless controlling all he wrote by his sense of their keen intelligence and fastidious taste; they, on their side, recognised his genius and gave it generous praise. In 1829 his blank-verse poem on *Timbuctoo* gained him the Chancellor's Medal; it was the admiration of his circle at Cambridge, and was hailed by an enthusiastic notice in *The Athenæum*. Better though it is than most prize-poems, there is nothing in it definitely Tennysonian. His peculiar and individual accent, the mark and test of his work, did not come to him at once. Encouraged by the success of *Timbuctoo*, he proceeded to bring out (1830) his first separate volume of verse. Even in the fifty-three *Poems, chiefly Lyrical*, of which he subsequently retained about half for his permanent work, his accent is fitful; and, although pieces like *Mariana in the Moated Grange*, *The Dying Swan*, and *Oriana*, are full of promise and suggestion, while they have the signs of true poetry, the whole book is eloquent of a genius still feeling its way amid the pitfalls of immaturity.

His first poems (1830).

One obvious feature in the work of this new poet struck his critics. Its harmony, its colour, its vivid appreciation of beauty, its minute natural observation, no less than its failings, were all due to the "Cockney" school, and especially to Keats. Although the elements in Tennyson's poetry were various, its foundation rested upon Keats and partook of his qualities, good and bad. The *Quarterly* and *Blackwood*, which had been obstacles in Keats' way, attacked the young poet before long out of sheer opposition to his belated cockneyism, Lockhart in the one and Wilson in the other. Tennyson, upon his father's death in 1831, left Cambridge and resolved to make poetry the business of his life. At the end of 1832 he published a second volume of *Poems by Alfred Tennyson*, which began with *The Lady of Shalott* and contained *Œnone*, *The Lotos-Eaters*, *Mariana in the South*, *A Dream of Fair Women*, and other famous pieces. The improvement was tremendous, but the faults were there and were mercilessly picked out by the critics. Tennyson was too sensitive to face the world with another volume. He at once countermanded *The Lover's Tale*—which had been written at Cambridge five years before—just as it had begun to issue from the press. It was not published until 1879, ten years after its sequel, *The Golden Supper*. It was in 1833 that Tennyson thus retired. Before the end of the year the sorrow that was long to darken his life had befallen him. In September, Arthur Hallam, the friend whose spirit had been one with his, died suddenly at Vienna.

For ten years the only verses of Tennyson which the world saw were a few short and unwilling contributions to Annuals.

Under the shock of adverse criticism and his friend's death, and probably suspecting that he had been overrated by his companions at Cambridge, he set himself to the task of correcting and purifying his faults. Long as the interval was, the process in which he was occupied was thorough, and he came from it a perfect artist. Living mostly in London, and forming the acquaintance of many literary celebrities, he kept working steadfastly, studying, composing, recasting, pruning, revising, subjecting his genius to a remorseless drill, and all but immovable to every temptation to publish. *St. Agnes* and the lines, "O that 'twere possible!" that eventually proved the germ of *Maud*, were reluctantly given to the public in 1837. While he was working so unremittingly, his grief was struggling towards the expression which was to make it immortal: *In Memoriam* was unfolding itself gradually, leaf by leaf. The general result of this decade of labour and sorrow was an intellectual discipline to which no other English poet ever has attained; its special outcome was the collection of poems which laid the foundation of a greatness achieved by few.

Interval in publication (1832–1842).

§ 4. The *Poems* of 1842, published at first in two volumes, and, since 1848, in one, contained the best of Tennyson's work, published and unpublished, up to that date. A "truly golden book" of English song, in its diffusion and influence it has few worthy rivals. It is unnecessary to speak of its familiar poems in detail; it is enough to say that in preserving the uniformity of all those qualities which are the elements of poetry pure and simple, its new portion is quite unrivalled. Tennyson sedulously avoided those slips of execution into which great poets have too frequently fallen; in his blameless, finely chiselled verse, instinct with colour, emotion, and nobility of movement, we have the most perfect verbal music in English. The new book sprang at once into high favour, especially with those who had themselves some reputation in letters. Tennyson's fame was now safe. However, he was still poor, and the grant of £200 a year from the Crown, which Sir Robert Peel made him in 1845, was no more than was necessary to place him above anxiety. Yet it gave offence and was made the occasion for some satire in Lytton's *New Timon*. Tennyson's answer, written in a somewhat caustic strain, appeared in *Punch*. Detraction, however, could not touch his reputation. In 1847 *The Princess* received a hearty welcome on the ground of its poetical merit, although the general idea and scheme were satisfactory neither then nor now to critical judgments. The attempt to deal with so delicate and comprehensive a question as the new position claimed by women was doubtless impracticable from the very first. The "medley" which was its result was no less an incongruity because the poem was frankly introduced as

Tennyson's "Poems" (1842).

"The Princess" (1847).

such. But few readers who have enjoyed its exquisite stream of musical phrase would wish for anything different. The lyrics which divide the sections, acting as *intermezzi* in the course of the dramatic narrative, together with three or four which appear in the body of the poem—all these were added in later editions—are the high-water mark of Tennyson's poetry, each of them a perfectly wrought masterpiece of form and colour. For anything to compare with the beauty and workmanship of "Tears, idle tears," or "Come down, O maid," or the swallow-song, it would be necessary to go back to the Elizabethan lyric. In studied musical effect they are pre-eminent; each note of their quiet strain falls on the ear with a certainty and roundness which, in more audaciously concerted lyric pieces—in Shelley, for example—are too often blurred and obscure.

In 1850, the "great year" of Tennyson's life, the *Poems* reached their sixth edition, and *The Princess* its third. He now published *In Memoriam*, which, before the end of the year, ran into three editions. His marriage took place; and Wordsworth's death raised him to the Laureateship. *In Memoriam* was the most ambitious work of his life, a noble monument to his friend's memory. It was more than another *Lycidas* or *Adonais*, for it was a record of personal sorrow and progress of thought, going deeply into the mysteries of human life, equipped with reason and subtle argument. It is more than a poem of the ordinary kind; it goes behind the veil of mourning, and the poet stands face to face with the enigma of life and death, speaking reverently and asking questions of the secret world around us. At first sight it would appear as though poetry and philosophy had never been more perfectly wedded together than here—the splendid music of the verse, the peculiar stanza which was so eminently appropriate to Tennyson's genius, blending with firmly-knit, masculine argument. However, a better knowledge of *In Memoriam* will convince the student that its poetic merit is greater than its philosophical. There is no great cohesion in the argument; nothing is settled; great questions are raised, and no satisfactory answer is given; while, by the end of the poem, the spirits of sorrow and enquiry alike are distinctly less passionate. The fact is that this splendid jewel of English verse had been in the craftsman's hands so long, undergoing so constant a process of polishing and re-setting, that its inner significance became a quite secondary matter. As a contribution to contemplative poetry, it suggests much that is original, just as it has added a hundred exquisite lines to the proverbial philosophy of common life. But, as poetry and nothing else, it never falters or grows monotonous, in spite of its length and the uniformity of its construction. It is possible to select for ourselves a few pieces which seem the pre-eminent glory of the book, but this implies no disparagement to those which are left behind. Yet such passages as the Christmas stanzas, "The

"In Memoriam" (1850).

time draws near the birth of Christ," or the famous New-year lines, "Ring out, wild bells," the magnificent opening line and following prologue, the rapture of the concluding epithalamium, the short poem on Hallam's grave, and such glorious lyrics as "Wild bird, whose warble liquid-sweet," touch the lover of poetry as very little else in English can. The *curiosa felicitas*, the magic of inevitable phrase, which is ascribed so rarely to poets and so universally to Tennyson, appears in every line of *In Memoriam*.

With this noble and pathetic outburst of song Tennyson's position became undisputed. He still had to face much honest, intelligent criticism, and much unreasonable sarcasm, but his readers and his popularity increased together. During the early fifties he published very little. The *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington* (1852), which is that rarest of things, a great poem written by a laureate in his official capacity, disappointed many at first; yet, even were that disappointment just, the magnificent and simple conclusion, like a final crash of trumpets in a dead-march, would remedy everything. *Hands all Round* (1852) and *The Charge of the Light Brigade* (1854), together with *Riflemen, form* (1859), are good examples of the patriotic lyric, stirring and musical, but are otherwise outside the line of Tennyson's genius. *Maud* (1855), his next great work, a poem of marvellous beauty and intense sincerity, was received even more coldly than the *Wellington* ode, partly because the hero's angry ravings frightened the public, and partly on account of its occasional intemperance of expression on general subjects. As time went on, *Maud*, altered and enlarged in a second edition, was justly recognised as the most dramatic, impassioned, and intensely—not sentimentally—tender of all the poet's works. The same lyric stream which had been so noticeable in previous poems flowed unchecked in *Maud*, and such songs as "Come into the garden, Maud," are marvels of lyrical expression. At the same time, that clearness of vision and minuteness of observation which had been the chief qualities in Tennyson's juvenile pieces, were never keener than in the beautiful song just mentioned, and in the section beginning "Morning arises stormy and pale." And, by this time—indeed, by the time of *In Memoriam*—it is easy to see how Tennyson, so sensitive to the charm of luxurious colour and fragrance, had learned, by the use of faculties other than his senses, to convey self-restraint to his work. It is as though we saw the irrepressible sensuousness of Keats modified by the austerity and contemplative unearthliness of Wordsworth. Yet, stronger than all reminiscence of these, the personality of Tennyson, impressionable and yet severely reasonable, stands out by itself and brings English poetry a step nearer our own day.

Patriotic odes.

"Maud" (1855).

§ 5. He was living at this time at Farringford in the Isle of

Wight, which remained his favourite residence to the end. Here *Maud* was brought to maturity; here the scheme which, in the popular mind, has been Tennyson's chief legacy to his country, grew into shape. Both Milton and Dryden had already meditated an "Arthuriad," an epic founded on Malory's great cento of legends, with the pure king and his knights as the centre of the picture. While Tennyson was still very young he began work on the subject, meaning, as he said himself, "to write a whole great poem upon it"; but, discouraged by his first reviewers, he laid it aside after he had composed the *Morte d'Arthur*. Still, his constancy of purpose brought him back again and again to this cherished design, until, in 1885, forty-three years after the first piece, he wrote the last word, as it seems. However, the plan of the *Idylls of the King* admitted of indefinite expansion; each piece, as it appeared, was a complete episode in itself, and their number might have been increased to any extent from the mass of legend surrounding Arthur. In the present state of the poems there are ten idylls with an introduction, *The Coming of Arthur*, and an epilogue, *The Passing of Arthur*, in which is included the wonderful *Morte d'Arthur* of 1842. The title, *Idylls of the King*, was given to a volume published in 1859, which contained *Enid*, *Vivien*, *Elaine*, and *Guinevere*, and was supplemented by various contributions in 1869, 1872, and 1885. The final order of the idylls is: *Gareth and Lynette* (1872), *The Marriage of Geraint* and *Geraint and Enid* (1859), *Balin and Balan* (1885), *Merlin and Vivien* (1859), *Lancelot and Elaine* (1859), *The Holy Grail* (1869), *Pelleas and Ettarre* (1869), *The Last Tournament* (1872), and *Guinevere* (1859). The separate episodes are connected by a distinct bond of unity. Thus the earliest idylls contain the story of Arthur's ideals and aspirations, of his magic influence on his young knights, and the inauguration of his glorious reign—"The King will follow Christ, and we the King." But, even from the beginning, there is a "little rift within the lute" which, at first imperceptible, widens until, in *Vivien* and *Elaine*, it is openly revealed. The four final idylls, from the pathetic confession of failure in *The Holy Grail* to the despair of *The Last Tournament* and the sad epilogue of *Guinevere*, contain the history of the destruction of those ideals so fondly cherished at first—a tale of hopeless overthrow. However, the tragedy ends in calm and the promise of hope, expressed in Arthur's dying speech. Thus the *Idylls* have their lesson; their picture of ideal purity marred by the intrusion of sin, is plain for everyone to see. Considered solely as poetry, they have moved the popular taste far more effectually than the more subtle and intellectual *In Memoriam*; yet, speaking critically, their position in Tennyson's work is scarcely as high. Nevertheless, they are eminently Tennysonian, showing a descriptive power which never took its opportunity so richly.

"Idylls of the King" (1859–1885).

Even in the hazy, imaginary atmosphere of Camelot, Tennyson saw everything with startling clearness and translated everything into his language of artful, definite phrase. And still, breaking from time to time the placid, sun-shot surface of his blank verse, appear one and another of those little lyrics which are to many Tennyson's most abiding gift to poetry. The lyrics of the *Idylls*—"The Song of Love and Death," or "Trust me not at all, or all in all"—are little inferior to the lyrics of *The Princess*, although they are far less prodigal of colour.

While the *Idylls* were thus being slowly gathered together, a new volume (1864) proved a worthy supplement to the poems of 1842. The title-poem, *Enoch Arden*, and one or two other pieces, were experiments in the homely form of idyll which Tennyson had attempted years before in *Dora* and *The Miller's Daughter*. Several other poems, among them the consummate *Tithonus*, had already appeared in magazines and elsewhere. Although this volume was not well received by the critics, the idyllic pieces took a hold on the affections of the general public which they have never lost. *Enoch Arden* itself is a noble poem, full of touches equal to Tennyson's best work, and avoiding sentimentality of treatment where it might easily have fallen into it. At the same time, its diction is far too wealthy and elaborate for the simplicity of the subject; and those passages of it which, taken by themselves, are remarkable specimens of Tennyson's style, are out of keeping when considered in their relation to the main theme. *Aylmer's Field* and *Sea Dreams* are inferior; but, on the whole, the volume, with a less bewildering beauty, falls little below the level of 1842. In *The Northern Farmer* (old style), he also showed a gift for dramatic monologue in dialect of which he gave many later examples. He had incontestably a dramatic gift—the gift, which Browning possessed in an even greater degree, of speaking to the world under the guise of an individual type. Whether he was capable of anything further—of assembling and massing a number of different characters on the stage, and producing a "just and lively picture of human nature"—remained to be seen. The *Idylls* occupied most of his time between 1864 and 1875. It was in this last year that his first play, *Queen Mary*, was published. It was followed by a series of dramas, some of them good, one or two of them without much merit of any kind. All, except *Harold* (1876), have been brought out on the stage, and *Becket* (1884) met with a brilliant success. However, Tennyson cannot be said to have enriched our dramatic literature very much. Fine as verse, and, as plays, eminently suitable for the closet, his dramas cannot be said to adapt themselves to the stage. *Becket*, a full drama of the historical class, marks a distinct advance upon its predecessors. *The Cup*, *The Falcon* (both 1884), and *The Promise of May* (1886) complete the series.

"Enoch Arden," etc. (1864).

The dramas.

Happily, Tennyson's energy was not altogether absorbed by his dramatic work. In 1880 was published a volume of *Ballads and other Poems*, which included such masterly work as *Rizpah*, *The Northern Cobbler*, *The Revenge*, and *The Defence of Lucknow*. In the next decade three more volumes appeared: *Tiresias, and other Poems* (1885), *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After*, etc. (1886), and *Demeter, and other Poems* (1890). Some of their contents, such as *Tiresias* in the first book, and *The Progress of Spring* in the last, were of earlier composition, but the vast majority consisted of recent work. No doubt in most of these pieces there is a perceptible falling-off. Tennyson, however, could lose and yet excel. In *Despair*, *The Spinster's Sweet-Arts*, *To Virgil*, and *Early Spring*—all of the 1885 volume—the loss is not obvious, the excellence unmistakable. The later *Locksley Hall* bears little mark of age but its wisdom, and the *Demeter* volume, beside its eponymous poem, contains, in *Vastness*, *The Ring*, and *The Throstle*, achievements worthy of the poet's best days; while in the immortal verses that close the book, *Crossing the Bar*, the one manlike attitude of man towards death is given with an impressiveness that has made it the most moving poem of the age.

Later volumes.

In 1884 he had accepted a peerage. No other Englishman had been ennobled by the State on purely intellectual grounds. His life had passed smoothly. Unaided, poetry had brought him into worldly circumstances more favourable than any poet had yet encountered. His chief sorrows were the deaths of his friends; and, in 1886, the premature loss of his younger son clouded his life heavily. But the year that was to be his last on earth was also to heighten his renown. Early in 1892 he surprised the world with one more drama, *The Foresters*, a woodland pastoral dealing, in four acts, with the story of Robin Hood. It was published simultaneously in New York, where Augustine Daly produced it on the stage, and in London, and was enthusiastically received. In the autumn, after he had entered his eighty-fourth year, another volume from his pen was announced; but when this was almost ready for publication his slowly sinking physical powers unexpectedly gave way. He died in the early morning of October 6 at Aldworth, near Haslemere, a house which he had built for himself in 1868. Six days later his body was borne to its grave in Poets' Corner amid a ceremonial of unwonted solemnity and grandeur. Before the month was ended his voice was heard once more in *The Death of Œnone and other poems*, with nearly all its old nervous strength, if with something less than its old music and depth. Most of the pieces in this volume, although written in extreme old age, show no traces of senility; even the weakest of them bears the firm impress of the master's hand.

Last poetry and death.

The fate of Tennyson's poems in the future, the future alone

can show. But he has been to his own age much more than other poets have ever been to theirs. Not only is his verse a pure well-head of noblest song; it is also an unfailing spring of comfort and a stimulant to activity. No other English poet ever has been in such close and sympathetic touch, not merely with nature or man, but with so many sides of contemporary life, in such intimate intelligence with the most beneficent forces of his age. This age has found in his verse the appropriate melody for its thoughts, longings, and aspirations; its voice is a rebuke to the morbid and unhealthy tendencies of later days. Posterity may think less of him than we ourselves. At any rate, his popularity shows no signs of growing less, and he has laid his contemporaries under a debt of gratitude that cannot possibly be exaggerated. As the spirit of Wordsworth, not always recognised, permeated the first half of the nineteenth century, so Tennyson is the guiding spirit of its latter half, happier in the fact that he stood, not aloof from his contemporaries, but face to face with them.

Summary.

§ 6. Tennyson was long in winning popularity, but the reputation of the great poet who divides with him the honours of the Victorian era was not assured until the very last years of his life. ROBERT BROWNING was born in Camberwell three years after Tennyson. His father, a clerk in the Bank of England, was something of a poet, scholar, and artist, and took care to train his son's tastes in the direction which they seemed most likely to take. Browning was educated, for the most part, at home; at one time he went to school at Peckham, at another he attended lectures at University College, London. But, in the meantime, he was picking up knowledge of all kinds with unusual thoroughness and laying the foundations of that wide and various scholarship which often forms a rather perplexing element in his poems. He determined to become a poet, and was allowed to choose for himself. During his early years he felt the influence of Shelley and Keats, particularly of the first; but other forces combined to form his poetry. These two, however, were the influences which went to make *Pauline* (1833). *Pauline*, a long introspective monologue, struck the key-note of Browning's peculiar genius—his power of entering into the secret thoughts of various individuals and placing them in dramatic form. In spite of a not unnatural crudity, the poem contains passages of great beauty, foreshadowing the great lyric power of future years. It found a few readers, and then was forgotten, until the growth of public curiosity disinterred it from its oblivion. Rossetti was so enamoured of it that he copied it out word for word in the reading-room of the British Museum.

ROBERT BROWNING (1812–1889).

After *Pauline*, Browning went on his travels, visiting Russia and Italy, and seeing for the first time the Venetian village of Asolo, with which his name afterwards was so closely associated. On his return he published *Paracelsus* (1835).

His new poem, cast in a more or less dramatic mould, was in reality a series of monologues relieved by one or two *dramatis personæ* who act as foils to the central figure. Paracelsus was the first of the great portraits which Browning drew, partly from history, partly from his own imagination; and here, for the first time, he showed his genius for portraying a character, in its strength and weakness, with a sympathy that has made his work so great a treasure to so many. Not merely the poetry of the volume was recognised—and the splendid song "Heap cassia" was enough testimony to its inspiration—but its dramatic character was soon perceived. Macready asked the young poet to write a play for Covent Garden. The result was *Strafford* (1837), which met with some success. Browning had made a careful study of his subject—it is said that he wrote a life of Strafford for Forster's *Statesmen of the Commonwealth*—but his conclusions on his hero's character were probably more original than true. The impartiality for which he constantly pleaded, the dispassionate examination of the same character from all sides, often led him into an unscientific and illogical view of history which was altogether partial. Otherwise, *Strafford*, without any particular fitness for the stage or remarkable poetic genius, must strike every reader as an unusually powerful drama, quivering with passion and intense feeling — on the whole, the most memorable of Browning's tragedies. Had he continued in the same manner he might have gained the general ear more easily. However, in 1840, he chose to retard his fame by publishing *Sordello*, the most intricate poem which ever distressed the wits of a hard-headed public. Even in the present days of extended culture, when everyone is ashamed to plead ignorance of its subject, *Sordello* is something of an enigma; nor has the ordinary reader time to undertake the severe course of preliminary study which is necessary to the appreciation of its beauties. The poem, a somewhat incoherent narrative imbedded in digressions and psychological arguments, is full of lyric eloquence and exquisite phrase, but its perverse vagueness and allusiveness must always stand in the way of its better qualities. It earned Browning that reputation for wilful obscurity and neglect of form which clings round his memory to this day, and was long regarded as his distinguishing mark.

Poems of first period (1833–1841).

In 1841, however, he began to address a coy public in a series of poems under the general title of *Bells and Pomegranates*, which appeared at intervals in the form of cheap pamphlets. The first of these was *Pippa Passes*, a collection of dramatic scenes and interludes through which runs the thread of a single influence—the voice of the village-girl singing songs to herself as she walks through Asolo, and unconsciously nerving each of the weak *dramatis personæ* to sudden decision. In every

"Bells and Pomegranates": early dramas (1841–1846).

respect—in the coherence of its plot, the energy of its moral purpose, the beauty of its lyric snatches, and the unforgettable freshness of the whole—*Pippa Passes* is the finest and most delicate organism among Browning's longer poems. It was succeeded in 1842 by two more parts of the series—that rather unsatisfactory and dry tragedy, *King Victor and King Charles*, and the *Dramatic Lyrics*, his first great collection of short poems. It is very interesting to notice that in the very year in which Tennyson, after a long course of study, gave his matured and perfect art to the world, Browning published this evidence of erratic and volcanic genius. Even in the noble iambics of *Artemis Prologises*, and in the suavity of *Rudel to the Lady of Tripoli*, we see a certain irreclaimable ruggedness which is triumphant in the *Cavalier Tunes* and the terrible *Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister*, and is the very antithesis to the Tennysonian canon of form. Yet in the luxurious beauty of Tennyson's verse there was nothing of the variety, the rude energy, the lyrical spontaneity of *Waring* or *Through the Metidja*, very little of the dramatic insight of *In a Gondola*, nothing of the historical faculty which, in *My Last Duchess*, catches the inner spirit of a complex and difficult period. Tennyson's was the purer poetry: Browning struck the deeper, more human note.

The next instalments of *Bells and Pomegranates* were dramatic. *The Return of the Druses* and *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon* (1843)—the second, perhaps, although it failed at Drury Lane, the most suitable of Browning's plays for the stage—were followed by *Colombe's Birthday* (1844), and this in its turn by a second series of collected poems, the *Dramatic Romances and Lyrics* (1845), many of which were printed in *Hood's Magazine* a little before publication. The *chef d'œuvre* of this volume was the *Tomb at St. Praxed's*, a fresh study in monologue of that period which had been taken in *My Last Duchess*—condensing brilliantly and vividly the versatile and unscrupulous spirit of the Renaissance, its love of art, its abandonment of spirituality, its contrast between profession and practice in the words of the dying Bishop. It is incontestable, however, that in these short masterpieces Browning appeals to few but educated people; the sombreness of *St. Praxed's* may be appreciated at once, but its whole point is not caught in a minute. Those who wish to appreciate Browning and are shy of his erudition have naturally appropriated *Saul*, *The Lost Leader*, and *How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix* for themselves. The real lyric beauty of Browning's work is to be found once more in "O to be in England," and the first poem of the *Garden Fancies*, a gem of passionate love-poetry.

§ 7. *Bells and Pomegranates* concluded, in 1846, with the Florentine play of *Luria* and the half-verse, half-prose *Soul's Tragedy*. It was in 1846 that Browning married the wife for whom he entertained the most passionate and undivided

affection—the poetess Elizabeth Barrett. Their married life was principally spent in Italy, at Florence and elsewhere, and, during this time, Browning wrote very little. Yet what he wrote was of his very best. In 1850 he published the noble pair of religious poems, *Christmas Eve* and *Easter Day*, in which he expressed his faith with fervent devotion. Those who seek in him the teacher rather than the poet will find in this small volume the essence of his doctrine, somewhat formless and obscure, yet impregnated with the germ of a strong and abiding faith. Here again he coincides with Tennyson, for it was in this very year that *In Memoriam* appeared. Once more we see the same differences, the opposition of ruggedness to shapely form and smoothness, the contrast between the steady, even flow of Tennyson's published verse and the irregular current of Browning's poetry, now halting in the shallows of mere prose, now suddenly bursting into eddies of song ; and, more than all, the difference of temperament between the two poets becomes obvious, the elder doubtful and speculative, searching here and there with carefully-planned questions, the younger clinging to the central fact of Christian belief, from which all his speculations radiate. Once again the palm of poetry must be awarded to *In Memoriam*, but Browning remains the wiser counsellor and consoler.

Poetry after marriage: "Christmas Eve," etc. (1850).

In the two volumes of *Men and Women* (1855), published five years later, Browning reached the summit of his art. He walked the heights for some sixteen years after with scarcely any diminution of power. It is not too much to say that every word of these fifty-one poems (rearranged in subsequent years) is worth reading and re-reading. Nothing could excel the already published *Tomb at St. Praxed's* in its kind ; but none of these pieces, in its grasp of character and environment, whether historical or imaginative, falls appreciably below that masterpiece. In each poem we see, upon its own confession, the inner workings of an individual soul revealed with an intensity of dramatic force that, were the verse free from any beauty of phrase whatever, would give it lasting distinction. The variety of subject, the uniformity of subjective insight in every case, make Browning the greatest English exponent of human nature after Shakespeare. At the same time, the degree of book-learning which must go to the complete appreciation of Browning must be considered in the light of a drawback ; he spoke to the world in riddles, and took no care to give it any clue. The two great companion monologues, *Fra Lippo Lippi* and *Andrea del Sarto*, the *Toccata of Galuppi's*, in which the decaying society of Venice is painted in a few light stanzas, a perfect contrast of brilliant and sombre colours, the weird *Heretic's Tragedy*, *Holy Cross Day*, and the buoyant *Grammarian's Funeral*—all these require some previous knowledge, unless we are content

"Men and Women" (1855).

to miss the point and satisfy ourselves with an occasional glimpse of superficial beauty. Others, again, like *Childe Roland* and *How it Strikes a Contemporary*, are perplexing at first sight, and for some time after, without being especially learned or unusual in subject. On the other hand, Browning's admirers found in these volumes the completion of *Saul*, lyric imaginings of common-place situations like *Evelyn Hope* and *The Last Ride Together*, poems appealing to the sense of colour like *Women and Roses*, or going straight to the heart, like *The Guardian Angel*. *Bishop Blougram's Apology*, coarse and uneven on the surface, suggested new problems of character to thoughtful readers ; *Instans Tyrannus* and *The Patriot* stirred the imagination with their hot, unconventional energy. Last of all came the lovely dedication, *One Word More*, the finest and most sincere address which any poet has made to his love—in the matter of form and passion and general beauty the most exquisite of Browning's shorter pieces.

Six years passed, and Mrs. Browning died, to her husband's endless sorrow. It was not until nine years had gone by since *Men and Women* that he brought out his next book, *Dramatis Personæ* (1864). The poems of this volume were somewhat more introspective and tragic than those of early years ; their relation to true poetry was also a little more remote. *The Worst of It*, one of those marvellously fine bursts of passion which cause the reader an almost intolerable feeling of admiration, and *Too Late*, both of them eminent among their companions, have a bitterness and hopelessness very different from Browning's usual optimism ; while, in *Gold Hair* and *Dis aliter visum*, he becomes deliberately cynical. Yet, if *James Lee's Wife* is uncouth and *Mr. Sludge* is simply verbose, no obvious decline can be remarked in a volume containing *Abt Vogler*, *Rabbi Ben Ezra*, and the magnificent and courageous cry in the face of death which resounds in the few lines of *Prospice*.

"Dramatis Personæ" (1864).

Browning's works were collected in six volumes in 1868. During that year and 1869 appeared the four volumes of *The Ring and the Book*, which is to Browning's poetry what the *Idylls* are to Tennyson's. The scheme of the poem is eminently characteristic of its author. It is an attempt to give, in a series of monologues, every possible view of a somewhat sordid and problematic crime which took place in Rome at the end of the seventeenth century ; and so to purge the alloy from the perfect ring of truth, by suggesting, out of all these various accounts, the real aspect of the case. "A whole series of books about what could be summed up in a newspaper paragraph," said Carlyle, with a double intention. From the setting forth of the scheme we pass to the examination of public opinion ; we hear the criminal's supporters speak, then the supporters of the murdered wife, next

"The Ring and the Book" (1868–9).

the impartial, cultured, dilettante view. Then, in succession, the three principal actors speak to us—the impertinent criminal, the priest whose life has been changed by his part in the affair, the innocent Pompilia on her deathbed. After the monologues of the prosecution and defence comes the sublime meditation of the Pope, to whom arbitration has been referred; then Guido speaks again, confessing his crime on the verge of death; and finally comes the conclusion of the whole matter, Browning's own summing up of the case which he has thus discussed. It is only natural that in this enormous drama—for drama it really is, though not in the strict sense of the stage—Browning should give way to a natural discursiveness and indulge in almost unlimited digression. The result is a want of unity which, without affecting the poem as a whole, injures the several parts. As in the ring which Browning employed as his figure, the pure gold is beaten with difficulty from the dross. Yet few pages are absolutely without some trace of the precious metal of true poetry, while the whole book adds to our knowledge of mankind, giving us its suggestions with all the authority of practical experience. To begin at the beginning and read patiently to the end is something of a task, but the reader is amply rewarded. In the monologues of Giuseppe and Pompilia he will learn to discover a great and new pleasure, to partake heartily in their trials and sufferings, to feel himself the influence of these two souls, so different, yet so mutually powerful on each other for good; he will see the problem which was so delicately put forward in *Pippa Passes*, the employment of the weak things of the world as instruments of good, worked out fully and even more firmly in this later work; while in the Pope's soliloquy he will recognise once more the old handling of character, the old sureness and cleanness of touch. Further, Browning's sense of beauty, his command of colour, are at their ripest in *The Ring and the Book*. Passage upon passage of brilliant imagery and pictorial description occurs to the student of these volumes, sometimes in isolation, sometimes, like Caponsacchi's account of his flight with Pompilia, in sustained narrative. And certainly few things are more beautiful, not merely in Browning, but in all poetry, than the superb dedication to his wife's memory which closes the opening book.

§ 8. *Balaustion's Adventure* (1871) was fully worthy of its great predecessor, and was the first of those volumes in which Browning sang of Greece as he had sung of Italy. Scattered poems in the past—notably *Artemis Prologises*—had made ready the way for this charming poem and the translation of the *Alcestis* to which it forms the frame. It was also the first of his longer poems which really could be enjoyed by everybody; under the inspiration of Greek tragedy his rough places were made plain; he wrote with a softness quite unusual to him. The opening part of the book takes a very high rank

Critical period in Browning's verse (1871–1876).

among the rich pictures which he loved to paint; that concrete perception which had been a chief feature of Tennyson's work and had been hitherto an inconstant, if not rare, quality in Browning, is in this case undeniable. In the same year, however, *Prince Hohenstiel Schwangau, Saviour of Society* (1871), a long monologue whose hero is intended to represent Napoleon III, marks the beginning of a certain dreariness which descended on his later work. *Fifine at the Fair* (1872), a volume of mature wisdom which is especially and justly dear to the more appreciative students of Browning, was caviare to the general. Browning no longer simply neglected form and poetic convention; he became a chartered libertine in the employment of disagreeable mannerisms which, in *The Ring and the Book*, were obvious in germ, and now flourished like weeds to the utter confusion of the legitimate poetic element. There is all the difference in the world between the venial obscurity of *Sordello* and the wilful obscurity of *Fifine*. *Red Cotton Night-Cap Country* (1873), the story of a peculiarly distressing tragedy which had occurred in Paris not long before, gives promise in its fantastic title of its irritating and jerky mechanism. What thinly dramatic element might be found in the incident is buried beneath heaps of digression and clumsy metaphor; we are inclined to ask where the point in telling the tale lies. However, in 1875, he returned to his Hellenic studies with a long sequel to *Balaustion*, not so fine indeed, and savouring strongly of the affectation which had cast its shadow over all his poetry, but containing magnificent passages worthy of his best days. *Aristophanes' Apology*, like *Balaustion*, had its ulterior purpose in the stalwart defence of Euripides' reputation against his modern critics, and included a translation of the *Hercules Furens*. In the same year *The Inn Album*, a grim and tragic story told in a succession of vivid scenes, each of which intensified the same situation, proved that Browning's dramatic power was not altogether gone. But *Pacchiarotto* (1876) tells its own story of decline. In *Hervé Riel* it gave one more popular narrative-poem to the world; but even its best pieces —the famous *Pisgah Sights*, for instance—recalled little of Browning's greater and earlier manner.

With *Pacchiarotto* we are past the turning-point of his verse. Next year a translation of Æschylus' *Agamemnon* (1877) completed his Hellenic poetry. Henceforward he became emphatically the teacher, still going for his text to out-of-the-way founts of knowledge, and sometimes, in his urgent quest of subjects, going beyond his depth. In *La Saisiaz* and *The Two Poets of Croisic* (1878) he produced a couple of poems which, although their intrinsic beauty of thought is great, have little superficial loveliness to recommend them. The *Dramatic Idylls* of 1879 and 1880, with fairly recondite subjects, are very spirited, and appealed to popularity more loudly than any of his previous collections.

Final poems (1876–1889).

But in *Jocoseria* (1883) the reader can do little but regret the early lyrics and deplore the incoherent, almost snappish manner into which the great poet had by this time fallen; while, in the curious volume, half philosophical, half theological, of *Ferishtah's Fancies* (1884), the lyrical *intermezzi* and epilogue suffer from a fatal disposition towards bathos. Yet these later lyrics, in spite of their far from agreeable brusqueness of tone, have a great value, a sterling mark of poetic worth which asserts itself after some acquaintance; and the best feature of the *Parleyings with Certain People* (1887), the dullest of all Browning's volumes, is the very occasional use of lyric songs in its course. *Asolando* (1889), which was published on the day of his death, was similarly charged with lyric work, whose charm needed a little discovery, but was nevertheless there. He died on December 12, 1889, at the age of seventy-seven.

Summary.

Browning was unquestionably the most original poet of the century, deriving less from previous poets than any of his contemporaries, and living in an atmosphere almost entirely of his own making. That his influence on poetry has been small is hardly to be wondered at; his revolt against all the canons of art cannot be easily imitated. The tendency in modern poetry to deal with everything obscurely and figuratively is largely due to him; but his peculiar mannerisms fortunately can be never copied with any pretence to originality. It is natural that his very hardness, his chaotic use of abundant material, have drawn so many educated students to read and receive intellectual benefit from his poetry. But, like all writers who, working on their own lines, have won their way in spite of opposition, he has met with the misfortune of becoming the idol of a fashion and attracting to himself a crowd of indiscriminate and ignorant admirers. He has been denounced by one party as a writer of high-sounding nonsense, and exalted by another as the greatest "teacher" of modern days. Between these two extremes of reputation he has fallen as between two stools. If he was a teacher, where he taught most obviously he became a very mediocre poet. And he is not so much a teacher with authority as a very earnest and brilliant student in the school of human nature, possessed of great inductive talent, and consequently in danger of error where his reason takes a step too far forward. He speaks with imperfect inspiration of the great secrets which he hears, often with an honest assumption of knowledge which he has not gained. He is thus no great prophet whose word must come to pass in every case; he has, with a Shakespearean depth of insight into individual character, nothing of the great, calm, Shakespearean view of humanity as a whole. He is primarily a great poet whose greatness is placed in relief by his very faults; in the second place, he is a philosopher whose work, like that of Carlyle and Ruskin, has had a wonderfully suggestive and stimulating influence on the thought and life of two generations.

§ 9. There is no exaggeration in saying that for a very long time after their marriage ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING was much more famous than her husband. The story of their romantic courtship and marriage is now before the world in full; their love, amounting to adoration for each other, may be read in their noblest poetry. It is enough to say that Mrs. Browning, the daughter of a Mr. Moulton, who, on succeeding to property, changed his name to Barrett, was born near Durham six years before her husband saw the light in Camberwell. Her girlhood was very precocious; from her earliest years she manifested a taste for books and something like serious scholarship. At fourteen she published an epic on *The Battle of Marathon* (1820), and at twenty an *Essay on Mind* (1826). She was a victim to ill-health, which grew upon her with years, until, when she first met Browning, she was a confirmed invalid. In 1833 she published a translation of *Prometheus Vinctus* with some shorter poems, and, in 1838, when her future husband was just becoming known to a few, *The Seraphim, and other Poems*, containing such famous pieces as *Cowper's Grave* and *Victoria's Tears*, gave her a recognised position among poets. Six years after another collection of *Poems* (1844) added still further to her reputation. There can be very little doubt that at this time her genius was at its highest point, although her characteristic faults were never more marked than in these volumes. The mutual attraction which she and Browning felt for each other's work led, about this time, to a friendship, and this, gradually ripening into passionate love, had its result in a marriage which, if it distressed her family for a time, added to her material happiness. Her love, too, inspired her most perfect piece of work, the so-called *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, written not long before her marriage, privately printed in 1847, and included, with two or three additions, in the complete edition of her poems which came out in 1850. Their married life was spent almost entirely in Florence, where their house became a rendezvous for literary celebrities and a centre of noble thought and wise counsel. Her devotion to their adopted country was expressed, first in *Casa Guidi Windows* (1851), later on in the *Poems before Congress* (1860), between which appeared her long narrative poem of *Aurora Leigh* (1857). *Poems before Congress* was the last published volume of her lifetime; she died at the end of June 1861 at Casa Guidi, and, in the course of 1862, her *Last Poems* came as a supplement to her previous work.

E. BARRETT BROWNING (1806–1861).

Aurora Leigh, which swells the bulk of Mrs. Browning's poetry, has always been a favourite book with the lovers of social problems. In spite of some beautiful detail and a degree of interest which can hardly be expected from a versified novel, the main importance of this prodigious volume lies in its psychological and moralising tendency. Towards the end of her life, too, her

Characteristics of Mrs. Browning.

manner approximated so closely to her husband's that her work now and then reads like a not very satisfactory imitation of his great lyrics. All her really individual work is to be found in the collected poems of 1850, beginning with the *Drama of Exile* and *The Seraphim* and ending with the *Sonnets from the Portuguese*. The key-note of all these pieces is an emotional and somewhat spasmodic form of passion, never free from melancholy save when, in the *Sonnets*, she rises above herself and leans on a stronger personality. An intense sympathy with suffering led her into philanthropic appeals which moved her generation; a strong sense of morality and justice, a desire to bring others to the perception of her own ideals, are also features of her work. It follows that this impulsiveness of spirit, ennobling her slightest poem, carried her admirers away with it and gave her the claim to be considered the greatest English poetess. Great poetess she undoubtedly was, and many, indeed, most of her early pieces vibrate with an enthusiasm and passion that go far to neutralise their obvious defects. In any case, the student of her work cannot fail to recognise its purifying influence, or to be better for reading it. But it is nevertheless a fact that very little of the delight in poetry for its own sake is to be obtained from her verse; she is even less than her husband a poet's poet. Her not dissimilar neglect of form is very seldom transfigured in those wonderful moments of clear vision and rapture which are so common and so welcome in Browning's verse. Even in *Cowper's Grave* or the *Vision of Poets* the presence of defects, or at least their apprehension, haunts the mind, and only in the *Sonnets*, where for once she allowed herself to be chained to form, does she escape any reproach. Two extraordinary faults, from which spring several minor defects, hamper every page of her work, with the exception mentioned above. The most obvious and indefensible of these is her total inattention to rhyme. It may be argued charitably that in many places—and notably in the *Vision of Poets*—her rhyme is a method of assonance which does not interfere with the general impression of beauty. The famous lines on Lucretius are none the worse because they rhyme "mood" with "broad" and "God"; but, were the image they contain less fine, the looseness of their mechanical structure would be more remarkable. And constantly she goes beyond the easy limits of assonance and strays willingly into the worst rhymes. There is no need, unfortunately, to give examples of a fault which is patent everywhere. The second fault is almost as common—her continual temptation to overstrain the sentiment of her poetry and gush extravagantly. Doubtless, this has been no drawback in the eyes of her less critical readers; but criticism, which may pass her peculiarities of rhyme with regret, finds a more serious and deeply-rooted blemish in her abuse of sentiment and passion. Her scholarship and reading could not preserve her from bad taste. Sometimes it is a whole

Her great drawbacks.

poem which speaks to us of this—for example, *The Brown Rosary*, a sentimental romance with no point and no redeeming truth to the medievalism it dimly imitates; sometimes a glaring infelicity of phrase, as in the lines from *Wine of Cyprus*, which her husband chose as the motto to his *Balaustion*; sometimes a breathless overcrowding of images, good or bad, as in the hasty phrases of the *Vision of Poets*. It is easy to see how, from these radical faults others spring, and how they mar the poetic aspect of her best work; how also they neutralise the effect of her appeals to humanity and sympathy. She had no strain of genius in her deliberate eccentricities; where she is most conventional, she is most inspired; where she throws aside the restraint of rules, she is usually commonplace. The inequality of her husband's verse had in it something divine; she in her shortcomings was purely mortal and fallible. Yet it is indisputable that her reputation was deserved, and that it was given to her, as to few, to echo the aspirations and to touch the inmost spirit of her century.

§ 10. The reputation of MATTHEW ARNOLD is divided between prose and poetry. His influence has also been felt in more than one way. As a Government Inspector of Schools, he did educational work which cannot be rated too highly, while, as the militant champion of "sweetness and light" against British Philistinism, he was one of the greatest intellectual forces of his century. Yet in both these respects he is merely a factor in general progress, an interesting and unusual figure; it was in poetry that he made his way to immortality and took his place among the first. He was the eldest son of the great head-master of Rugby, Dr. Arnold, and was born at Laleham in 1822. He went to school at Winchester and Rugby; went to Oxford in 1842 as a scholar of Balliol; and, although he failed to get his first-class in classics, was elected to a fellowship at Oriel in 1845. The chief episode of his Oxford life was his friendship for Clough; it was under the spell of that friendship that he became especially the poet of the "sweet city with the dreaming spires." In 1847 he left Oxford to fill the post of secretary to Lord Lansdowne, and in 1849 he published a tiny volume, *The Strayed Reveller, and other Poems, by A.*, which gained him a small audience. This book struck the key-note of his work—its eclectic character, its predilection for classical models, its stateliness of utterance. Between this and his next book his life received that practical impulse which diverted him in time to come from poetry, by his appointment as Inspector of Schools in 1851. In 1852 he published another tiny volume, *Empedocles on Etna, and other Poems*, which, however, he soon withdrew, owing to his dislike for something in the title-piece. In 1853 he brought the book out a second time with fresh additions, and put his name to it. Although he was in no sense a popular poet, the surpassing beauty of his

MATTHEW ARNOLD (1822–1888).

Poetical period (1847–1867).

workmanship could not be denied. Thus, when the chair of Poetry fell vacant at Oxford in 1857 he was elected to it, and held it for ten years, being re-elected when his five years' term of office closed in 1862.

The poetical fruit of his professorship was his elaborate but doubtful attempt at a tragedy in the Greek manner, *Merope* (1858). Not until 1867 did he publish anything new; but his volume of *New Poems*, which appeared then, showed no falling-off, although there was some increase in their elaborate constraint of manner. He wrote little more poetry, although at the end of his life he went back to his first love. Other attractions drew him, and his *Poems* of 1869 were merely a collection of those pieces which he desired to live. His professorship at Oxford, not fruitful in poetry, had given him a great reputation as a critic and prose-writer. His early reports as a school-inspector show that form was a principal consideration from the first, and his preface to *Merope* introduced him as a somewhat dogmatic critic who wrote excellent and well-considered prose. It excited a keen interest, which was fanned by his occasional magazine articles and his professorial lectures (in Latin) at Oxford. Indeed, he made the ten years from 1857 to 1867 an epoch in the annals of criticism. All that is most characteristic in the criticism of the later nineteenth century, as distinguished from that of the preceding age, its peculiar tone, temper, principles, and aim, its insistence on the artistic side of literature and on literary economy—all this was largely determined by four volumes of this period. The *Three Essays on Translating Homer* (1861), the *Last Words* on the same subject (1862), the important *Essays in Criticism* (1865), and the *Study of Celtic Literature* (1867), were not well received by everybody, and indeed abounded in material faults which were exactly calculated to provoke resentful opposition and ridicule. Arnold knew very little about Celtic literature, and the charm of his dicta on the subject consists chiefly in their loose adherence to their text; in general criticism he followed trustfully and blindly where Sainte-Beuve led, and was betrayed by prejudice into statements which, in the mouth of a sane critic, are simply amazing. But to balance these defects, his style was captivating and persuasive, and the general drift of his arguments set before his readers an end and aim, a remedy for ignorance and blindness, which could not fail to be convincing. If any conclusive evidence is to be sought for the advantage of that "sweetness and light" which he was never tired of advocating in after years, it is found at once in the characteristic qualities of his own prose; and, while he was addressing his appeals for culture to his educated countrymen, he was writing an important chapter in educational history. The fruit of his two missions to the Continent was seen in *Popular Education in France* (1861), *A French Eton* (1864), and *Schools and Uni-*

Arnold as professor: beginning of his prose work.

versities on the Continent (1868). In Arnold's charge the utilitarian and artistic elements in prose, generally on unfriendly terms, joined hands.

§ 11. His early essays in criticism led him further than books. In 1869 *Culture and Anarchy* brought him to the front as a critic of politics and society. The book is a long critical essay upon the social condition of England and a diatribe against the crassness of the middle classes. It urged, with a lively seriousness, the remedy of culture for this evil, a regimen of "sweetness and light." He had borrowed this characteristic name for his medicine from Swift. His lofty and superior tone, his frequent relapses into criticism which was nothing more or less than generalisation founded upon defective experience, were faults which annoyed and disgusted his critics. A large experience, in his educational tours, of one class of society had not unnaturally blinded him to the fact that this was not necessarily typical, and that there were other elements than Philistinism in British life. Many received the essay with mockery, others with blustering scorn, while Arnold's use of formulas and catch-phrases made him obnoxious to allusive witticism. But the book made a stir; it affected many minds, and left a lasting effect on general opinion and conduct. Few modern books contain, with obvious shortcomings, more delightful and stimulating reading. In 1871 he published *Friendship's Garland*, a brilliant display of ironical wit in which he strove to turn the laugh against the laughers; but he never permitted a second edition, and it is only very recently (1897) that the book has been reprinted.

His prose period (1869-1888).

Many of Arnold's admirers have lamented his pre-occupation at this time with subjects on which, if the truth must be told, he had very little right to give an opinion. His latest biographer has, indeed, described the period immediately following *Culture and Anarchy* as a "wilderness" in his career. From ethical criticism and the championship of culture in common life he passed to a similar review of religion for which he was ill-equipped. He had no special theological knowledge; his own attitude to religion was a somewhat superior tolerance free from any dogmatic element whatever. His thorough acquaintance with the Bible and his supreme appreciation of its literary value were, it need hardly be said, fruitless weapons in the campaign on which he entered with *St. Paul and Protestantism* (1869). *Literature and Dogma* (1873) was described by himself as an "Essay towards the better apprehension of the Bible"; and to those who showed themselves unwilling to apprehend he addressed the equally strenuous *God and the Bible* (1875). Two years later he added one more buttress to his position, *Last Essays on Church and Religion* (1877), and thus brought to a close his persevering attempt to transform and save religion by

Essays on theological questions.

his wide-working panacea of culture. The adventure was unfortunate for his reputation. On all main issues judgment must be taken to have gone against him. Beginning with an altogether inadequate outfit of necessary learning, he went on to make baseless assumptions and to reason unsoundly. Success in his design would certainly have been fatal to the interests which he was toiling to serve. The one compensating feature of this ruin is its literary character, which could not fail to make itself felt.

Later essays.

Although theology continued to share his attention with literature, politics, and education, his remaining work consists almost exclusively of occasional papers or lectures on topics relating to one or other of these subjects. These, as they accumulated, were gathered into volumes of *Mixed Essays* (1879), *Discourses in America* (1885), and so on. In politics and education he combated with brilliant eloquence the aims and methods of his friends, the Liberal party; in literature he went on deepening the old lines, bringing the test of foreign criticism to bear on English letters, and attempting once more to win Englishmen over to the side of his beloved culture. A second series of *Essays on Criticism*, collected in a posthumous volume, contains several of these later pieces. His later poems, too few in number, are deeper in tone than most of their predecessors, and, if less attractive, are little behind his best.

Arnold's characteristics.

In both kinds of writing Matthew Arnold was equally excellent. In the formal virtues of composition, in quality of cunning craftsmanship, some of his later prose has never been surpassed, his verse seldom. In his hands language becomes a living thing, instinct with spirit and grace, matchless for expressiveness; prose so luminous as his, so well-knit and yet so flexible, so perfect an image of the workings of the informing intellect, so measured and masterly in its construction; verse in which the sustained musical note is so exactly in harmony with the sentiment, the spiritual mood, that strives for utterance, may be safely asserted to have come but once from the same English pen. Of the general character of his matter we must judge rather more diffidently. The tendency of current opinion and, we must add, of sound criticism is to set his poetry above his prose. There is certainly in his poetry more that makes for immortality. The superb burst of song at the close of *The Church of Brou*, the lyric charm of *Requiescat*, the stately, calm stanzas of *The Scholar Gipsy* and *Thyrsis*, are greater contributions to literature than the most sweetly reasonable sentence in *Culture and Anarchy* or the *Essays in Criticism*. Yet, while the manner of his prose is only less exquisite than that of his verse; while faults of taste, if they can be urged against the one, may be urged against the other also, there can be no question that his influence on his generation was exercised through his prose;

that, while in poetry he reflected with peculiar success the dominant spirit of his age, its morbid hopelessness in the face of eternal problems, in prose he worked constructively and experimentally. His errors were not always dignified; sometimes they bordered on the ridiculous; but, in the end, his influence, if not directly permanent, is at any rate a remarkable link in the chain of English thought. As a poet he has had an influence which has left traces here and there on subsequent verse. The great drawback which must be alleged against his poetry is that, in spite of an individuality in choice and treatment of subject, it is too deliberately bound to form and precedent to be wholly original. The extraordinary variation of manner which separates Tennyson from Keats does not separate Arnold from Wordsworth; the real difference lies in Arnold's greater command of scholarship. He is the poet whose natural genius is acted upon by classical education; there is not one of his poems into which classical influence does not enter in some way or other. The spirit of *The Scholar Gipsy* and *Thyrsis* is as classical as anything modern can be. Nor was this classicism and love of form the second or third-hand artificial classicism of Pope; neither was it the instinctive classicism of Keats, or Shelley's compound of instinct and scholarship; it was the fruit of culture, the finest flower of a public school and University education. With this the influence of Wordsworth was joined to create an entirely exceptional kind of poetry. In *The Scholar Gipsy* we have the combination of these two forces. The contemplative spirit of the poem, its harmony of man with nature, its austerity of tone, are Wordsworthian; its gift of phrase, its constant flashes of colour, its distinctness, and the matchless image with which it closes, are definitely classical. In poems like *Rugby Chapel*, *Dover Beach*, or *Westminster Abbey*, Wordsworth is dominant; no one but he could have inspired these meditations, although no one would have been less likely to think of the purely classical framework in which they are set. Wordsworth, however, does not preside in this way over the earlier poems. *Sohrab and Rustum* might be a consummate translation from a Greek epic; *Requiescat*, from the Anthology; while there are other things, the end of *The Church of Brou*, for instance, or certain stanzas in *A Summer Night*, which detach themselves from any obligations to a model. To seek for the exact grounds of community between poets is difficult, and the obvious spiritual relation between Arnold and Wordsworth is complicated by the difference between their circumstances, the age of new ideals whose herald was the older poet, and the age in which the younger poet lived—an age in which those very ideals of life and immortality had grown dim. But, when Arnold, in his later years, spoke of Wordsworth's "healing power" as irrecoverable, he unwittingly touched the note on which his voice is most like his master's. Melancholy and

Nature of his Wordsworthianism.

depressed as he was, touched, like Carlyle or Ruskin, and even more deeply than they, by a sense of the mystery of life and the hopeless gulf between ideals and realities, speaking despairingly and with a certain degree of scepticism on the problems which surround man, he nevertheless supplied the remedy with the wound. In the calmness and sanity of his verse its complaining note is lost ; and, with Wordsworth, he takes his place among the great masters of human thought and feeling whose verse does not act as a momentary stimulant, but permanently strengthens and fortifies.

§ 12. Matthew Arnold's influence upon his contemporaries existed side by side with a movement whose effect was more immediately obvious. The Pre-Raffaellite movement in art and literature was stimulated by several circumstances. In the first place, the Oxford movement had aroused an interest in medieval ideals ; the historical position of its leaders implied a certain enthusiasm for archæology. In the second place, Ruskin, during the forties, was struggling to awaken some artistic feeling in the British public, and was directing their attention to the work of the early Italian painters. The Pre-Raffaellite movement, when it came into being, was aided generously by Ruskin, while it excited a general interest throughout England, and won for itself a very large number of followers. At its head stands the unique figure of DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI, poet and painter. He was a Londoner, the son of an Italian professor at King's College, who was a keen student of Dante, and gave his son the name of Gabriel Charles Dante, afterwards transposed into Dante Gabriel. Apart from his education at King's College, his early life was different from that of most literary men ; he went, while still very young, to the Royal Academy and became an artist. The following years were so taken up with painting that his poems did not appear till much later, when the Pre-Raffaellite movement, of which he was the virtual founder, was already known in the art of himself and his master, Ford Madox Brown, and in the first poems of Mr. Swinburne and William Morris. His first important book—he had made contributions before this to brilliant and shortlived periodicals—was his volume of translations, called *The Early Italian Poets* (1861). This would have been soon followed by a volume of original poems had it not been for a romantic and sorrowful interlude in his life. In 1860 he had married a Miss Elizabeth Siddal, who was apparently made to be his other half, not only in her singular physical likeness to his favourite type of beauty, but in the likeness of her mind to his own. Two years later she died, and he, crushed by the sorrow that had fallen on him, buried the MS. of his poems, then almost ready for the press, in her grave. After nearly eight years in the tomb they were exhumed and published (1870). There was, therefore, a period of something more than twenty years

Pre-Raffaellite Poets: (1) D. G. ROSSETTI (1828–1882).

before Rossetti revealed himself as a poet. He published only one other volume, the *Ballads and Sonnets* (1881). Meanwhile, his health had given way, and his life had become very unhappy, in spite of his friends' devoted attention. He died at Birchington-on-Sea in the spring of 1882, and is buried in the churchyard.

Perfection of Rossetti's work.

The two main characteristics of Rossetti's work are its unvarying excellence and its almost monotonous vividness and fulness of colour. He worked under one inspiration, and that was Italian. Certain English poets exercised a temporary influence upon him. His admiration for Keats was more permanent than for any other. But we have no other instance of a poet who, after spending all his life, with the exception of a few months, in England, and in a very unpoetical part of London, was so entirely free from the contamination of circumstances. Rossetti was brought up on the study of Dante. His earliest poetry and prose were a series of translations from Dante and his contemporaries. At heart, in the midst of London, he was a Florentine of Dante's age, full of the ideals and perplexities which beset Dante. The exquisite harmonies which, in the *Divine Comedy* and the *Vita Nuova*, were the first full note of the most musical of languages entered into all Rossetti's writing. No translation is so entirely reproductive of its original as Rossetti's is of the *Vita Nuova*; the music of Dante's prose sounds all through the graceful English of the version. This is true also of every piece in the book—the best guide in existence to medieval Italian poetry. The natural effect of this upon Rossetti's own work is to give it an almost overpowering sweetness and heaviness. In almost every case his poems have the air of a laborious translation from a suave and melodious original—a translation in which every care has been taken to ensure euphony and smoothness. Wherever the chisel has gone its marks remain; although they may be but faint scratches, they are still visible. Yet everything that Rossetti wrote is more or less a masterpiece of poetical workmanship, and his heaviness of style is certainly a comparative matter. The noble *Dante at Verona* has a certain spontaneity and flow of eloquence which rescues it from this charge; *The Burden of Nineveh*, in a different key, is in this respect not dissimilar; while the elaboration of style is not nearly so evident in these poems as in the famous *Blessed Damozel*, or in the great sonnet-cycle called *The House of Life*, which appeared in both volumes—under a revised form in the second. But in both collections, and in the second even more than in the first, the most remarkable feature is the clear pictorial effect produced by every verse and every line. *Troy Town* is a bright, clearly-defined picture whose classical subject is coloured and somewhat quaintly attenuated by the spirit of medieval Italy. It would be rash to say that none but a painter could have

Pictorial beauty of his verse.

written it; but it is explained none the less by the fact that Rossetti was a painter who derived his art from the Florentines of the fifteenth century and faithfully copied their mannerisms. One may find analogies to Rossetti's poems in the work of the early Italian artists—to *Troy Town* in Botticelli's picture of Calumny, or of Aphrodite rising from the waves, in which the classical tale is translated into medieval forms, or to *Eden Bower* in the greenery of the same painter's well-known group of Spring. And, when Rossetti passed from his fundamental Italianism to the treatment of English subjects, he carried with him the same principles of drawing and colouring. At the same time he became less sensuous and more vigorous; his manner became more direct, his harmonies less obtrusive. The mystic ballad of *Sister Helen*, which belonged to his first volume, gives, through all its shadow and mystery, a series of perfectly clear, distinct visual impressions; its quaint artificiality is, if the paradox be allowed, purely natural. The slightly exotic tinge, however, from which *Sister Helen*, with its well-considered pauses and refrain, does not escape, is wholly absent from *The King's Tragedy* and *The White Ship*—the finest modern ballads in English, retaining all Rossetti's pictorial quality, and yet full of life and action. If we sum up Rossetti's work it will be found that his excellence as a translator—an excellence at its best in his version of Villon's *Ballade of Dead Ladies*—somewhat hindered his ease as a poet on his own account. At the same time, in the small body of verse which he left to the world, we may see an example, hardly inferior to Tennyson, although in a different manner, of perfect workmanship and a faultless, if rather limited conception of his art—an unsurpassed harmony of pure music and rich colour.

§ 13. The Pre-Raffaellite movement received an impulse in the Italian direction from Rossetti. Mr. Swinburne, its most voluminous poet, showed it its way to a more general culture, suggesting models French, English, and Italian. But its pure medievalism was best expressed in the work of WILLIAM MORRIS, who, although six years younger than Rossetti, and not an original member of the Pre-Raffaellite brotherhood, was certainly the motive force of Pre-Raffaellitism in literature. Morris was a man of many interests. His father, like Ruskin's, was a London wine-merchant. He went to school at Marlborough, which had just then been founded, and was at Exeter College, Oxford, with his friend Edward Burne-Jones. Both left without taking their degrees, and resorted, Burne-Jones to art, Morris to poetry, with which a practical devotion to art became gradually interweaved. *The Defence of Guenevere, and other Poems* (1858), brought several disciples under his influence, and is as momentous in the history of Pre-Raffaellitism as Rossetti's frescoes in the Oxford Union; but not a few critics were found to despise its wilful quaintness and the extraordinary refrains

(2) WILLIAM MORRIS (1834–1896).

which Morris sowed thickly in his ballads. However, *The Life and Death of Jason* (1866), a long narrative in heroic couplets of an unfamiliar order, found few voices against it, and, from that time forward, the charm of Morris' poetry was recognised by all. His popularity was ensured by the four volumes of *The Earthly Paradise* (1868–70), the most delightful collection of tales in English verse since Chaucer. After this time he wrote a great deal of narrative poetry, and translated the *Æneid* and *Odyssey* into verse; but his only great success, after *The Earthly Paradise*, was *The Story of Sigurd the Volsung* (1877). The later part of his life was chiefly given up to prose romances, in which he followed his old method of story-telling at greater length, and, to tell the truth, not without becoming a little tedious. These fictions, beginning with *The House of the Wolfings* (1889), and ending with the posthumous *The Well at the World's End* (1897) and *The Sundering Flood* (1898), were not by any means his sole occupation. He continued, with the assistance of Mr. Vigfússon, to translate Icelandic sagas; he became a fervent apostle of Socialism, and —not his least claim to remembrance—he established a shop in Oxford Street, and a manufactory of stained glass in Surrey, which, more than any other experiment, have revolutionised modern ideas of house and church decoration. He lived in a charming house at Kelmscott on the upper Thames, where he died in 1896.

A mistaken analogy has been drawn between Morris and Chaucer, because there is a certain likeness between the scheme of *The Earthly Paradise* and that of *The Canterbury Tales*. There is no doubt that one suggested the other, but the likeness goes no further. Morris, the "idle singer of an empty day," is more like Spenser than Chaucer; the atmosphere of his narratives is a languid stillness far remote from reality; his heroes and heroines move slowly, and with a melancholy engendered by the shortness of their "little day," through dreamy gardens and orchards; they live in a dying summer not of this world, but of some land "east of the sun, west of the moon," whether it be nominally Greece or Italy, or some northern land. The soft motion and colour of the couplets—which are more reminiscent of Keats than anything since his day—are veiled beneath a haze bred of the windless heat of the country. In all this there is no touch of reality, nothing of that ardent naturalism in which Chaucer delighted. Everything is imaginary, phantasmagoric. The men and women of *The Earthly Paradise* are not flesh and blood, but tapestry figures, which, coming before us as part of a procession of form and colour, have therefore a real interest for us. And, while the book and its companions cannot be said to have any healing power, they form effective refuges in which we may temporarily forget the problems and austerities of life and feel ourselves soothed. It is difficult, at this time in

"The Earthly Paradise" (1868–1870).

history, to realise the existence of a man like Morris, who, in the midst of utilitarianism and money-making, could preserve so high an ideal of art in practical business, and could give his day-dreams so exquisite a form, and with results so real. He belonged actually to the great succession of medieval craftsmen who worked for the sake of their art, and used their science in behalf of beauty. He has left examples of his work all over the land, but none more enduring than his great narratives in verse. *The Earthly Paradise* is a point at which meet most of the great influences of the nineteenth century, where Keats and Coleridge and Scott join hands with Rossetti and Ruskin, while over all there is the presence of a natural medievalism of thought and manner, the instinct of one born out of due time.

§ 14. Mr. Swinburne is still with us; and the only other important member of the Pre-Raffaellite school who claims mention here is CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI, the younger sister of Dante Gabriel. Her life was even less eventful than her brother's; like him, she lived in London, and, for the most part, in Bloomsbury. Her original poems came out before her brother's, and were illustrated by him—*Goblin Market* in 1862 and *The Prince's Progress* in 1866. She wrote rather scantily and published at long intervals, never producing any long or important poem, but confining herself to lyric work, which, in process of time, became more and more religious. *Time Flies* (1885) and *The Face of the Deep* (1892) were devotional books, partly in prose partly in verse—the second a very remarkable commentary on the Book of Revelation and by far her most bulky work. It will be easily understood that the Tractarian and Pre-Raffaellite elements are mingled very equally in Miss Rossetti's verse; her devotion to the more dogmatic aspect of Christianity and to the Anglican Church was strongly tinged by her brother's mysticism, and, in its turn, relieved that mysticism of its waywardness and lack of point. Her purely lyric gift was greater than her brother's, but she had not his complete mastery of divers kinds of music. Yet the faculty of melodious expression was hers in no small degree, and in this regard she contrasts very favourably with her only competitor as a poetess, Mrs. Browning. She had those purely poetic gifts in which Mrs. Browning was so deficient; she never allowed herself to wander into loose rhythm or false rhyme; the cast of her mind was reserved and restrained, and the good taste which her concrete religious ideas imposed prevented her from slipping into pitfalls which Mrs. Browning never avoided. But, when we have made this distinction, we have said everything. Lovers of poetry from its æsthetic side must necessarily admire Miss Rossetti as much as they shrink from Mrs. Browning; but those to whom poetry is first and foremost the vehicle of ideas and suggestions will find everything they require in Mrs. Browning,

(3) CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830–1894).

and in Miss Rossetti very little, if anything. Where Miss Rossetti's great importance lies is in the link she forms between the Pre-Raffaellite movement and religion. Her work connects the purely artistic and the purely spiritual side of imagination as no poet's work had yet done. Herbert, Crashaw, Keble, fell, when their spirits were highest, into artistic error; Miss Rossetti alone gives us religious poetry which is free from occasional want of taste and flaws of construction.

§ 15. With Morris and the Rossettis our list of great poets closes. Of the more prominent minor poets of the period, the most interesting is, perhaps, ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH, not merely because he was the subject of Arnold's *Thyrsis*, but for his genuinely poetic vein, whose produce was, however, rather unsatisfactory. He was born in Liverpool and educated at Rugby. Dr. Arnold was then head-master, and Clough, through all his school life, was the *beau idéal* of Arnold's conception of a schoolboy. The promise of Rugby was not quite fulfilled at Oxford. He went up with a Balliol scholarship, and took his degree with only a second-class in classics. He had taken a profound interest in the course of the Oxford movement, which had no doubt diverted him, as his friends thought, from his work. This religious preoccupation gave place to doubt, and doubt to a settled scepticism. In 1842 he was elected to a fellowship at Oriel; in 1843 he became a tutor of the college; in 1848, brooding over the sorrows of the outside world, he left Oxford for ever. He found little rest anywhere else. He stayed for short periods in Liverpool and Paris, then settled for a longer time in Rome, returned to England and became head of a London settlement called University Hall. From London he migrated to the American Cambridge; and finally, after a few years' work as examiner to the Education Department, he died at Florence in November, 1861.

Other poets: ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH (1819–1861).

Clough's genius was strangely dependent on seasons and circumstances. The moments of his life at which the external and internal conditions were alike favourable were few and brief. One of these followed his departure from Oxford. He then wrote—the first in England, the others in Italy—his three most successful long poems, *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich* (1848) (originally *Toper-na-Fuosich*), *Amours de Voyage* (1849), and *Dipsychus* (1850). Another was the journeying time which preceded his death. *Mari Magno*, his last lines as life was ebbing, belong to this epoch. Yet he is also seen at his best in some of his occasional pieces, as in *Qui laborat, orat* and *A London Idyll*. Clough's place among poets is, however, undetermined; and it must be owned that the critics have by this time ceased to think much about it. The power of his strongest work is unmistakable; and Lowell, whose criticisms were often dangerously wide of the mark, may possibly have been right in his notion that, in the middle of the present century, the voice

of the nineteenth will speak most truly in his poems. He handled the hexameter with fine effect in the *Bothie* and the *Amours de Voyage*, although not without blemish. His friend Arnold said of the *Bothie* that it has "some admirable Homeric qualities — out-of-doors freshness, life, naturalness, buoyant rapidity." But, with an undoubted gift for poetry and a real sense of humour, he was prone to error, and his work gives the reader, unless he is peculiarly constituted, a very limited pleasure. And, if Lowell's theory is possible, it is at least equally possible that in future years he will be remembered as Arnold's "Thyrsis" and as little more.

EDWARD ROBERT, EARL OF LYTTON, without any of his father's remarkable versatility, had in no small measure the gift of poetry. His place in history is higher than his father's; imperial concerns divided his energies with poetry through well-nigh his whole life. After a formal education limited to a short time at Harrow and the University of Bonn, he entered the diplomatic service when only eighteen, as an attaché to the embassy at Washington. He succeeded in his profession, and in 1872, after doing his duty in nearly every European capital, was appointed minister at Lisbon. In 1876, while he was here, Disraeli unexpectedly offered him the viceroyalty of India. He accepted, and made the four following years memorable in imperial politics by the resolute thoroughness with which he pursued a line of conduct then bitterly assailed by the Opposition, but now apparently sealed and sanctioned by time. When Disraeli's ministry fell in 1880 he resigned, returned to England, and was created an earl. However, for seven years after, he had no public employment. In 1887 he was sent as Ambassador to Paris, where he died in 1891.

EDWARD ROBERT EARL OF LYTTON (1831–18

Lytton was a precocious versifier, and began to write with ease and fluency when he was only twelve years old. His first work was written before he went to Washington, but was not published until 1855. In this book, called from its opening poem *Clytemnestra*, he used the *nom de plume* of Owen Meredith, to which he adhered for some time afterwards. In 1857 came *The Wanderer*, a volume of lyrics, which was followed by *Lucile* (1860), and in 1861 he and his friend Julian Fane, under the pseudonyms of Edward Trevor and Neville Temple, brought out a volume called *Tannhaüser, or The Battles of the Bards*. In these early poems Lord Lytton showed that he had many of the best characteristics of a born poet, and had command of an unusual lyric gift. But his natural tendency was to imitation. In his first volumes he was obviously under the influence of Browning, while *Tannhaüser* was simply a fair poem in the Tennysonian manner. *Lucile* was an interesting experiment to show that the story of a French novel could be powerfully told in English anapæsts; but the author lived to regret that he had made it. In spite of his plasticity he wrote

many pieces in which original genius could be seen struggling under its incumbrances; and the critics continued to hope. But two or three of the next volumes were almost avowed imitations—*Serbski Pesme* (1861), of Servian national songs; *Orval, or The Fool of Time* (1869), of the Polish writer Krasinski; and *Chronicles and Characters* (1868), of Victor Hugo's *Légende des Siècles*. All three, however, contain strong and splendid work. If it was Lytton's fate to be a mocking-bird, his song can at any rate please the most exacting critic. And at last his *Fables in Song* (1874) justified his friends' hopes; they showed a light and heat unborrowed of any sun, and received an honourable place among original verse. But his next publications, *Glenaveril* (1885) and *After Paradise, or Legends of Exile* (1887), showed no further improvement. The first, a kind of novel in metre, although abounding in excellence, did not take with the public; the second, a gathering of metrical legends and parables, is a small affair. A volume, suddenly closed by his death at Paris, appeared posthumously under the name of *Marah*; in the lyrics that compose it the voice of Heine is clearly to be detected. One more chance remained, even after death. In 1874 he had written, and until his death had not ceased to perfect *King Poppy*. In December, 1892, this was published, and proved to be the long expected triumph. In design, construction, execution, and aim, this fantastic poem attests the presence of the best powers of an original poet. Criticism has nothing but praise for it.

§ 16. In conclusion, the poetry of the Victorian era is certainly not the least remarkable contribution to English literature.

Concluding summary.

The poets of the first period, Tennyson and Browning, whose life and work include almost the whole of the nineteenth century, are the immediate successors of the great romantic poets, widening and extending their stream of art and thought. Matthew Arnold, belonging to the middle of the century, mingles romantic traditions with the traditions of classical form, proving that poetry, even within constrained limits, may still be fresh and natural and a living impulse in literature. Then, during the 'sixties and 'seventies, the Pre-Raffaellite school of art and poetry rises to importance, clothing its romantic mysticism and medievalism with a quaint perfection of form, insisting on the beauty of art and avoiding trivial solecisms. The new poetry augmented the flow which sprang from sources so different as Wordsworth, Byron, and Keats; it was the continuation of the great literary revolution of 1798. A hundred years have passed since the publication of the *Lyrical Ballads*, and the world has not yet seen the end of their influence. Their romanticism has received many additions. It has been chastened by a riper scholarship, a more just appreciation of form; but, without the reviving influence of their spirit we could have felt nothing of these benefits. The fact is that, by the discovery of nature in her dim struggle to escape

from the bondage of artificial thought, Wordsworth and his contemporaries laid the foundation of all succeeding poetry, and the secret of that excellence and variety which are the marks of Victorian verse is to be found in their work.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

MINOR POETS, &c.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM (1828–1889), an Ulsterman, was long a respected man of letters in London, and edited *Fraser's Magazine*. His *Music-Master and other Poems* (1850) and *Day and Night Songs* (1854) have spontaneous and native grace; but his most ambitious effort, *Laurence Bloomfield in Ireland*, is not usually regarded as a success either as a poem or as an attempt to throw light on the Irish problem.

THOMAS ASHE (1836–1889), a scholar with a talent for harmonious verse, was the author of *The Sorrows of Hypsipyle* (1866), which deserves separate commemoration among the numerous books of minor poetry published during the century.

WILLIAM EDMONSTOUNE AYTOUN (1813–1865), an Edinburgh man by birth and education, a Writer to the Signet, member of the Scots bar, and Professor of Rhetoric and English Literature at Edinburgh, was a versatile poet and one of the great wits of his day. He became a writer for *Blackwood*, joined the staff in 1844, and married Professor Wilson's youngest daughter. His first important publication was the *Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers* (1848), deservedly popular with lovers of spirited poetry and the daring and picturesque in history. *The Bon Gaultier Ballads*, a collection of excellent parodies written in partnership with Sir Theodore Martin, came out in 1855 and ran into thirteen editions during the next twenty years. The year before (1854) Aytoun had written by himself a magnificent and only too faithful parody of Alexander Smith and the "Spasmodics" in *Firmilian, or the Student of Badajos, a Spasmodic Tragedy*. He also wrote a poem on *Bothwell* (1856), collected some *Ballads of Scotland* (1858), and produced, again in association with Sir Theodore, an excellent volume of translations from the *Poems and Ballads of Goethe* (1858). His humorous stories in *Blackwood* were highly amusing, and his novel, *Norman Sinclair* (1861), which had run as a serial in *Blackwood*, contains much that is of special interest to the student of Scottish life and society.

The most widely read of all our humorous poets in the nineteenth century is, perhaps, RICHARD HARRIS BARHAM (1788–1845), a Kentishman, minor canon of St. Paul's, and a City clergyman from 1821 to his death. With the exception of Hood, he was the cleverest weaver of grotesque rhymes and the most cunning contriver of drolleries of thought and speech that ever used English verse. He had brought out two novels, and written other things, with little recognition, when, in 1837, Dickens enlisted him in the service of the projected *Bentley's Miscellany*. He thus began to write the renowned *Ingoldsby Legends*, the first series of which, after appearing partly in *Bentley* and partly in the *New Monthly*, was first published by itself in 1840. The second and third series were added posthumously in 1847. "Barham," writes Dr. Garnett, "owes his honourable rank among English humorists to his having done one thing supremely well. He has thoroughly naturalised the French metrical *conte* with the

adaptations necessary to accommodate it to our national genius." *The Ingoldsby Legends* is, perhaps, the richest fountain of versified mirth in English, sullied, it is true, by bad taste and false sentiment, but always amusing.

WILLIAM BARNES (1801–1886), "the Dorsetshire poet," is the only constant writer of verse in dialect south of the Tweed whose poems bid fair to rank as classics of their kind. A native of the Vale of Blackmore, Barnes did not take Orders until he was forty-six and had been a lawyer's clerk and schoolmaster in different places. For the greater part of his clerical life he was rector of Winterbourne Came in his native county. His *Poems of Rural Life in the Dorset Dialect* appeared in three separate collections issued at intervals, and were not published in a single volume till 1879. Their purpose is to give "glimpses of life and landscape in Dorset," and to all lovers of nature and of that part of England they must be absolutely delightful. Barnes is worthy of a place in that triple society whose other members are Richard Jefferies and Mr. Thomas Hardy.

CHARLES STUART CALVERLEY (1831–1884)—formerly BLAYDS—was a Harrow boy and fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge. He was an excellent scholar — second in the classical tripos of 1856—and had a strong vein of delicate poetry, chiefly visible in his translation of *Theocritus* (1869), and a curious facility for writing Latin verse. His genius was, however, for comic verse and parody, and it is not too much to say that, as a parodist, he is first of all English humorists. Certainly the marvellous parodies of Tennyson in *The Tramp* and of Browning in *The Cock and the Bull* are not easily to be paralleled anywhere else. His best work is contained in the two small volumes, *Verses and Translations* (1862) and *Fly Leaves* (1872).

WILLIAM CORY (d. 1892)—formerly JOHNSON—an Eton master, published one tiny volume of poems, *Ionica*, which shows, not merely a singular aptitude for scholarly verse, but a classicism of spirit and form quite unusual in the nineteenth century. Where much minor poetry can be laid aside *Ionica* is worth careful study. It belongs, as its title implies, to Cory's Johnsonian days. As Cory, he devoted himself to an original and interesting *History of England*.

JOHN LEYCESTER, LORD DE TABLEY (1835–1895), whose name for many years was known to readers of magazines as the Hon. John Leycester Warren, collected and published his poems, shortly before his death, in two elegant little volumes, admirably illustrated by Mr. C. S. Ricketts. Lord de Tabley had the note of true poetry in him, but the essential character of his work is a respectable mediocrity. He was also an enthusiastic amateur of book-plates and published the monumental work on that subject.

SYDNEY THOMPSON DOBELL (1824–1874), one of the poets of the so-called Spasmodic school, was born in Kent, but was for the best part of his life a wine-merchant at Cheltenham. His earliest book, *The Roman* (1850), a dramatic poem with certain evidence of uncommon talent, manifested strong sympathy with Italy, hit the humour of the hour, and gained some applause. *Balder* (1853) contained excellent poetic material, and *England in Time of War* (1856) is a treasury of lyric poetry. But Dobell, working on a somewhat limited experience, and with an unrestrained heat of imagination, fell into extravagances of metaphor and contortions of sentiment and diction for which there was no excuse, and, with his friends, Alexander Smith and Philip James Bailey, fell under the lash of Aytoun's wit. This raised a prejudice against his work which no favourable criticism has been able to overcome. Yet it cannot be doubted that Dobell had within him the materials of a great poet, imperfectly fused and obscured by dross. His life, clouded by sickness and ill-health, was spent in Gloucestershire, and he died at Barton-end House, near Painswick.

Among imaginative writers who can be said to have written neither

prose nor poetry, but something compounded of both, CHARLES LUTWIDGE DODGSON (1832–1898), better known as LEWIS CARROLL, takes a very high place. A mathematical scholar and senior student of Christ Church during his active life, he was little known personally outside his own college, and probably there were hundreds who, until his death, never knew the real name and abode of the author of *Alice in Wonderland* (1866) and *Through the Looking-Glass* (1871). The value of these books, not only as the most delightful literature for children in English, but as a constant companion in later years, whose apparent nonsense contains an astonishing amount of real wisdom and common-sense, is known to everyone with any sense of humour. Lewis Carroll's nonsense-verses, plentifully scattered through his two famous books, are marvellous in their kind; perhaps *The Hunting of the Snark* (1876), as a sustained effort, is better than any. In his closing years he continued to write, and the verses of his last books are as good as ever; but the current of his tales begins to be interrupted by a fatal tendency to didactic writing.

ALFRED DOMETT (1811–1887) is known to a few as a poet, to many as the subject of Browning's *Waring*, an eloquent lament on his departure for New Zealand. "Waring," however, returned to England some years later, not indeed having distinguished himself by any Avatar in "Vishnu-land," but having enjoyed a very respectable career as a colonial politician. He published two volumes of poems, *Ranolf and Amohia, a South Sea Day-Dream* (1872), and *Flotsam and Jetsam* (1877)—the second dedicated to Browning, the constant friend of his lifetime.

SIR FRANCIS HASTINGS DOYLE (1810–1888), Professor of Poetry at Oxford, succeeded Matthew Arnold in the chair, and strove to maintain the prestige which Arnold had given it by publishing his own and his predecessor's lectures. Doyle was the author of several patriotic and stirring lyrics of war and the sea, such as the well-known *Loss of the Birkenhead* and *The Return of the Guards*.

FREDERICK WILLIAM FABER (1814–1863), of French extraction and Yorkshire birth, was educated at Shrewsbury and Harrow and at Balliol and University Colleges, Oxford, obtained a fellowship at University, and won the Newdigate. He was ordained, and became curate of Ambleside, where he cemented a previously formed friendship with Wordsworth, an admirer of his early verse. In 1842 he accepted the living of Elton in Huntingdonshire, when Wordsworth went so far as to write, "England loses a poet." But a month after Newman's formal secession to the Roman communion Faber followed him, and eventually became an Oratorian, first at Oscott and Cheadle, and then as head of the community in London. He died at the Brompton Oratory in 1863, and was buried at Sydenham. His numerous prose-writings are chiefly, his verse exclusively, devotional. Not always a perfect poet, he nevertheless has more than ordinary claims on our regard. His *Hymns*, published first in 1848, and, in a complete form, in 1862, are in general use among English Roman Catholics, and not a few have been taken into the hymnals of other communions.

SIR SAMUEL FERGUSON (1810–1886), born at Belfast, was a successful Irish barrister and Celtic antiquary, and obtained a wide local, and some general renown, which he fully deserved. As an antiquary he wrote several patriotic and spirited poems, collected together as *Lays of the Western Gael* (1865), and a long epic called *Congal* (1875). His best poem is *The Forging of the Anchor*, contributed to *Blackwood*, for which and *The Dublin University Magazine* he wrote many tales and ballads. In 1867 Ferguson was made the first Deputy Keeper of the Records in Ireland; in 1878 he was knighted; and in 1882 he was elected President of the Royal Irish Academy.

DAVID GRAY (1838–1861) was an unfortunate young Scottish poet, author of *The Luggie and other*

Poems (1862), whose deathbed sorrows were assuaged and his name "gracefully written in the history of English Poetry" by Lord Houghton. His verse gave little criterion of his real powers, and seems now to be on the high road to oblivion.

DORA GREENWELL (1821–1882) has commended herself to many as a devotional poetess. Her *Carmina Crucis* (1869) contains her best work. She was a woman of considerable intellectual power, as her *Essays* (1886) and *Life of Lacordaire* (1867) show. With half Christina Rossetti's genius and poetical faculty, her outlook on life, in her devotional work, both poetry and prose, is more helpful and less tinged by mystical reverie.

THOMAS GORDON HAKE (1809–1894), the friend of Rossetti and a doctor by profession, was a constant writer of serious and mystical verse. It must be owned, however, that the beauty of his thought is veiled by considerable obscurity, which tends to put his skill in lyric writing out of sight. A volume of his poems appeared soon after his death.

ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER (1803–1875), the famous vicar of Morwenstow, was more of an eccentric than a genius. During his strange career at Cheltenham grammar school, at Pembroke College and Magdalen Hall, Oxford, and at Morwenstow, Hawker gave the public some eight volumes of verse, of which *The Quest of the Sangraal* (1864) and *Cornish Ballads and other Poems* (1869) attracted most attention. Of his ballads, *The Song of the Western Men*, first printed in 1826, has made most noise; for with it he hoaxed both Scott and Macaulay, who took it for a genuine antique. Macaulay, indeed, founded a famous passage of his History upon it, and gracefully thanked the deceiver in a note. Hawker's only prose work of any value, *Footprints of Former Men in Far Cornwall* (1870), consisted of stray papers that had severally appeared in periodicals. Hawker married twice and died in communion with the Roman Church.

RICHARD HENRY HORNE (1803–1884), who altered his second name to Hengist, began life as a sailor. He took to literature in 1828, and, from 1833 onwards, was a prolific poet, dramatist, editor, and writer. Out of the general fluency and indistinct talent of his work, it is possible to rescue his epic poem of *Orion* (1843). On the whole, one can hardly regard Horne as much more than a versatile and clever miscellanist. He obtains, however, some importance in literary history as a regular correspondent of Elizabeth Barrett between the years 1839 and 1846, when she married Browning. Her letters to him were published in 1877.

RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES (1809–1885), created first LORD HOUGHTON for his political services (1863), was conspicuous through an honoured life both as a poet and a friend of poets and men of letters generally. In early manhood he wrote verses copiously. His two volumes of *Poems* appeared in 1840, and were succeeded by *Palm Leaves* (1841). To this store he subsequently added, but not abundantly. In prose he published *Monographs, Personal and Social* (1874), a collection of essays of much grace and charm. Perhaps he will be remembered longest as the biographer of Keats, the benefactor of David Gray, and the friend of Carlyle. His *Life of Keats* was published in 1848.

JEAN INGELOW (1820–1897), a minor poetess whose work at its best has great sweetness and charm, contributed to various periodicals, and wrote one or two long novels. Her best poem, *High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire*, has found its way into our anthologies. A Lincolnshire woman, and therefore a fellow-countrywoman of Tennyson, she had an extraordinary sympathy for the scenery of the South Lincolnshire flats, and the fens and sluggish rivers of the district became a curious and picturesque element in her poetry.

EBENEZER JONES (1820–1860), born in Canonbury Square, Islington, is remembered as the author of a book of very unequal but genuine poetry, *Studies of Sensation and*

Event (1843), which was killed by harsh criticism. Jones was consumptive, and died early; his sensitiveness prevented him from writing or publishing much more. The fact that he was a radical in politics, and worked for radical papers, may naturally lead to his confusion with ERNEST CHARLES JONES (1819–1868), a young gentleman who attached himself to the Chartist faction and wrote political songs of more than ordinary lyric fervour. Ernest Jones was also a sensational and worthless novelist.

As a writer of verse which is delightful nonsense and nothing else, EDWARD LEAR (1812–1888) is the only serious rival of Lewis Carroll. He began life by drawing birds and animals for the Zoological Society and various scholars and professors, and was for four years at Knowsley, Lord Derby's place in Lancashire. Here he wrote *The Book of Nonsense* (1846) for Lord Derby's grandchildren. In 1837 he left England and went abroad to study landscape painting. He taught drawing in Rome, travelled a great deal in the Mediterranean countries and India, and wrote four or five more nonsense-books, all of them excellent. He died at San Remo, and is buried there.

HENRY SAMBROOKE LEIGH (1837–1883), a prolific writer and adapter for the stage, wrote three or four books of rather thin verse, the chief of which, *Carols of Cockayne* (1869), had a temporary popularity.

FREDERICK LOCKER (1821–1895), who, after his second marriage, was known as Locker-Lampson, was the son of a well-known commissioner of Greenwich Hospital. In the main a scholarly dilettante, Locker was a perfect master of *vers de société*, scarcely equal indeed to Praed, but falling not far below him. His chief work in this kind is contained in *London Lyrics* (1857), and more is to be found in the very interesting miscellany called *Patchwork* (1879). His *Lyra Elegantiarum* (1867) is a selection from poets who have chosen, like himself, to write charmingly about trifles.

CHARLES MACKAY (1814–1889) was editor of several papers, including the *Glasgow Argus* and the *Illustrated London News*, and during his long life gave himself up to journalistic work. He wrote profusely and miscellaneously in prose and poetry, but is remembered chiefly by his popular songs, written in the forties and fifties, *Cheer, Boys, Cheer!* and *There's a Good Time Coming*, being the principal among them.

FRANCIS SYLVESTER MAHONY (1804–1866), commonly known by his *nom de plume* of "Father Prout," was a prominent figure among the journalists of the second quarter of the nineteenth century. He was born at Cork, and was educated at the Jesuit academy of Clongoweswood in County Kildare, and at various seminaries in France. He entered the Society of Jesus at Rome, and, returning to Ireland, became a master at Clongoweswood in 1830. Some irregularity of conduct led to his expulsion from the Order; and, although he managed with difficulty to obtain priest's orders in 1832, his connection with his Church was but small. He went to live in London, where his friend and fellow-countryman, William Maginn, introduced him to the brilliant circle of Bohemian journalists associated with *Fraser's Magazine*. The famous *Reliques of Father Prout* appeared in that journal from 1834 to 1836—miscellaneous *causeries* not unlike the *Noctes Ambrosianæ* of *Blackwood*, sown thick with original lyrics and extraordinarily able and versatile snatches of Latin, Greek, and French verse. In 1837, when he left England for five years of wandering over Europe and Asia Minor, he began to work for Dickens on *Bentley's Miscellany*; and, in 1847, he collected his letters as correspondent to *The Daily News* from Rome under the title of *Facts and Figures from Italy*. His pseudonym on this occasion was "Don Jeremy Savonarola." From 1848 to his death in 1866 he lived principally in Paris, where he was for some time correspondent to *The Globe*. In 1860 he wrote an inaugural ode for *The Cornhill Magazine*, of which his old friend Thackeray was editor; and, in 1876, Douglas

Jerrold edited *Final Reliques of Father Prout.* Mahony was a very picturesque figure in the literary history of his day. The quality of his verse is its fluency and humour, and a great ease and lightness of tone. Perhaps his best work is to be found in his wonderfully facile translations into foreign languages; but the piece of verse by which he is best remembered is his *Bells of Shandon*, which, if not without its faults, has, even in the rapid jingle of its short lines, a singular charm. He was buried in the vaults of the church at Cork, to which these lines have given a more than local fame.

PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON (1850–1887), son of JOHN WESTLAND MARSTON (1819–1890), an industrious writer of poetical drama, inherited something of his father's talent. Unfortunately he became purblind at three years old, and lost his sight altogether as time went on. His life, too, was saddened by the loss of many relatives and friends, including the poets O'Shaughnessy, who was his brother-in-law, and James Thomson. He belongs, roughly speaking, to the Pre-Raffaellite school in poetry, and was a rather too faithful imitator of Rossetti, using chiefly the sonnet form. His first book, *Song-tide, and other Poems*, was published in 1871; a complete edition of his poems appeared posthumously (1892) under the editorship of Mrs. Louise Chandler Moulton.

RODEN BERKELEY WRIOTHESLEY NOEL (1834–1894), a son of Lord Gainsborough, was a somewhat undisciplined poet and critic, who, like most essentially minor poets, has been at once overrated and undervalued. His work, from *Behind the Veil* (1863) to *Poor People's Christmas* (1890), gives one the idea that, while he generally has too little to say, he occasionally has too much. This second fault is certainly prominent in his prose work.

CAROLINE ELIZABETH SARAH NORTON (1808–1877), the second of the three beautiful Miss Sheridans, was the wife of the Hon. G. C. Norton, a brother of the third Lord Grantley. Mrs. Norton, who had a somewhat eventful life, was a very ready and fluent poetess. In her early life she imitated Byron very closely, and was styled by Lockhart "the Byron of poetesses." However, her lack of self-restraint in verse and her liability to the weakest forms of sentimental writing, have thrown her poems into semi-oblivion. Her fluency was little more than a musical volubility. Her best work is *The Lady of la Garaye* (1862). She also wrote novels and took an interest in social questions.

ARTHUR WILLIAM EDWARD O'SHAUGHNESSY (1844–1881), author of *An Epic of Women* (1870), *Music and Moonlight* (1874), etc., was closely allied to the Pre-Raffaellite school of poets and was brother-in-law to Philip Bourke Marston. He was an assistant in the British Museum for most of his short life. His poetry, although suffering from the complaint of limited thought and expression, is beautiful, full of melody, vivid colour, and dreamy, rather morbid, grace. He is certainly, if only by virtue of his first book, in the highest rank of minor poets.

FRANCIS TURNER PALGRAVE (1824–1897), son of Sir Francis Palgrave the historian, was rather a student of poetry than a poet, although he produced a good deal of fair, and sometimes excellent verse. He held the chair of Poetry at Oxford. His highest reputation will probably be as editor of *The Golden Treasury of English Songs and Lyrics* (1861), the best anthology of lyric poetry in the language.

COVENTRY PATMORE (1823–1896) an accomplished student and critic, pleased the public taste with *The Angel in the House* (1854), in which he struck a clear, but rather weak lyric note. Of his later poems, *The Unknown Eros* (1877) is the best. Not a great poet himself, he was fond of discovering genius in others, and gave much unselfish assistance and critical praise to *débutants* in literature.

ADELAIDE ANN PROCTER (1825–1864), the daughter of "Barry Cornwall," is known as the authoress of *Legends and Lyrics* (first series, 1858; second, 1862), most of which first appeared in *Household Words.*

Their dominant note is strongly religious, and some of them show some beauty and great intensity of feeling. The best known, *The Lost Chord* and *Per pacem ad lucem*, fairly indicate their general character.

WILLIAM BELL SCOTT (1811–1890), was an ally of the Pre-Raffaellite school, and, like his friend Rossetti, was at once painter and poet. His poetry is generally short and miscellaneous, and he wrote only one poem of any length, *The Year of the World* (1846). The chief influence in his work is that of Blake, who stirred the poets of his age and school so deeply. By profession he was a servant of the Science and Art Department, first at Newcastle-on-Tyne, and afterwards at South Kensington.

JOHN CAMPBELL SHAIRP (1819–1885), Professor of Poetry at Oxford and eventually Principal of St. Andrews, had a real gift of song, as seen in some of his sacred pieces. He was stronger, however, as a critic of poetry, giving proof of his strength in four volumes on *The Poetic Interpretation of Nature* (1877) and *Aspects of Poetry* (1881)—the second a book of Oxford lectures. Earlier than these he had written admirable *Studies in Poetry and Philosophy* (1868); and, in 1879, his *Life of Burns* came out in the "English Men of Letters" series. Of his poems, *The Bush aboon Traquair*, which appeared in *Kilmahoe* (1864), is the best known.

HELEN SELINA SHERIDAN (1807–1867), elder sister of the Hon. Mrs. Norton, and herself the wife, first, of the late Lord Dufferin, secondly, of Lord Gifford. A member of a brilliant family, she was herself a humorist and wrote songs and comic poems which are long likely to survive her sister's more melting effusions. Her son, the great pro-consul of our era, has written her memoirs in the collected edition of her songs and poems (1894).

ALEXANDER SMITH (1830-1867), the chief poet of the "Spasmodic" school, was a young Scotsman of humble birth, whose *Life Drama, and other Poems* (1853), contained such clear evidence of genius amid all their vagaries of thought and language that they were deemed worthy of a parody from the keenest Edinburgh wit of the day. Aytoun, in the epithet "spasmodic," fixed on them a nickname which could never be shaken off. Smith, however, was not crushed by the wit of *Firmilian*. His *City Poems* (1857) and *Edwin of Deira* (1861) proved both his courage and the continued vitality of his poetic gift, although still defaced by faults fatal to their permanence.

JAMES KENNETH STEPHEN (1859–1892), a son of Sir James Stephen, and author of *Lapsus Calami* (1890), was an Etonian and fellow of King's College, Cambridge. He distinguished himself as an orator at the Union, and his career, cut short so early, was full of promise. His verse, second only of its kind to Calverley's, is for the most part admirable parody, and similarly derives much of its inspiration from Cambridge.

SIR HENRY TAYLOR (1800–1886), born at Bishop-Middleham in County Durham, was long a valuable servant of the Crown in the Colonial Office, and was for two generations the common friend of almost every worthy type of man of letters, of Mr. Swinburne, as formerly of Southey. His earliest productions in verse, *Isaac Comnenus* (1827) and *Philip van Artevelde* (1834), both of them dramas, were intended as examples of a more chastened and dignified style of poetry than that which, after the Byronic wave had swept over literature, was in general fashion. In the opinion of the best class of readers and critics, the success fully justified the attempt. *Philip van Artevelde*, from its earliest appearance, had a considerable vogue, and is not likely soon to lose its reputation. His next drama, *Edwin the Fair* (1842), was almost equally successful, and reached its fourth edition in the author's lifetime. His subsequent work included a volume of poems, *The Eve of Conquest* (1847), and two more dramas, *The Virgin Widow* (1850) and *St. Clement's Eve* (1862). All these plays are closet-dramas upon Elizabethan lines. Taylor was also a journalist and prose

writer; he wrote early for the *Quarterly*, and in 1836 gave "advice to Sulla" from the stores of his own experience in a collection of essays called *The Statesman. Notes from Life* (1847) was another fruit of experience. In *Notes from Books* (1849) he gave the world the benefit of his views, chiefly on poetry, and mainly on that of Wordsworth. The instruction that lies in this book, at any rate, is not yet exhausted. Shortly before his death he published his interesting *Autobiography* (1885), which had been privately printed eight years before. His wife was the Hon. Theodosia Spring-Rice, whose father was created Lord Monteagle in the year of her marriage (1839). Taylor was made a K.C.M.G. in 1869, left the Colonial Office in 1872, and died at Bournemouth fourteen years later.

Of Tennyson's elder brothers, the second, FREDERICK TENNYSON (1807–1898), who contributed a third share of four pieces to the *Poems by Two Brothers*, published three or four volumes of poetry—*Days and Hours* (1854), *The Isles of Greece* (1890), *Daphne* (1891), and *Poems of the Day and Year* (1895). CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER (1808–1879), who changed his surname on coming into a small property, was for most of his life vicar of Grasby near Caistor, in an outlying part of the Lincolnshire wolds. He was the part-author of *Poems by two Brothers*, and developed a singular gift for sonnet-writing in four volumes published at intervals from 1830 to 1873. These were collected into one volume (1880) after his death. Frederick and Charles Tennyson were educated, one at Eton, the other at Louth School; they were both at Trinity College, Cambridge.

JAMES THOMSON (1834–1882) is one of the saddest names in nineteenth-century poetry, as in the eighteenth century it was one of the gayest. The second Thomson, born at Port Glasgow, was for some time an army schoolmaster, but was unfortunate enough to be dismissed from the service. He came under Bradlaugh's influence, became a free-thinker and hopeless pessimist, and sank into a state of drunkenness and despair. In his moments of recovery he wrote poetry which is almost without exception admirable and shows that, under other influences and in other circumstances, he might have risen to an almost undisputed pre-eminence among poets. His great work, *The City of Dreadful Night*, magnificent in its austerity and total blankness of despair, appeared serially in *The National Reformer* (1874) and was published in 1880. Thomson's six small books of verse were collected into two volumes in 1895.

MARTIN FARQUHAR TUPPER (1810–1889), a persevering writer of songs and ballads, is still celebrated as the author of *Proverbial Philosophy* (1839–76), which was immensely popular with a very large class. The book is now out of fashion, and at no time did it contain more than common-place thought served up in an out-of-the-way form; but its author was a good and generous man who never turned upon his critics or desisted on their account from his sincere attempt to benefit the world.

ISAAC WILLIAMS (1802–1865), fellow and tutor of Trinity College, Oxford, and an excellent parish priest, was author of much devotional poetry, "full of tenderness and pathetic sweetness," but comparatively unknown. Most of it is contained in *The Cathedral* (1838), a volume of verse closely allied to Herbert's *Temple*. Williams, with Keble, is one of the great Anglican poets of the Oxford movement. The recent publication of his *Autobigraphy* (1892) has revived the memory of a man of unusual accomplishment and great beauty of character.

THOMAS WOOLNER (1825–1892), author of *My Beautiful Lady* (1863) and *Pygmalion* (1881), was a sculptor in the first place, and a poet in the second. His poetry was, however, genuine, and like every other person of Pre-Raffaellite sympathies, he is an example of the close alliance between art and poetry. *My Beautiful Lady*, etc., appeared in its original form as a contribution to *The Germ* of January, 1850.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE NOVEL FROM 1850 TO THE PRESENT DAY.

§ 1. Beginning of the Victorian novel. § 2. CHARLOTTE and EMILY BRONTË. § 3. MRS. GASKELL. § 4. GEORGE ELIOT: her work and importance in fiction. § 5. ANTHONY TROLLOPE. § 6. CHARLES READE. § 7. WILKIE COLLINS. § 8. CHARLES KINGSLEY. § 9. Modern novelists: R. L. STEVENSON.

§ 1. By the year 1850 both Dickens and Thackeray had published their masterpieces, and, although they continued to write through the next decade, and Thackeray, in particular, added enormously to his existing work, they virtually belonged to a past generation. Dickens' world, so far as it was real, was a thing of bygone days; Thackeray was spiritually of the eighteenth century, and retired, as he grew older, into his favourite era. Both were Georgian rather than Victorian; and, if the great bulk of Thackeray's work appeared between 1850 and 1860, it is only chronologically that he can be reckoned among the Victorian novelists. Between 1845 and 1850, when he was beginning to write his great novels, the first signs of the new generation of novelists were seen. The writers who inaugurated the Victorian novel were only a few years younger than himself and Dickens. *Jane Eyre*, its earliest landmark, appeared while *Vanity Fair* was still coming out in parts, and the two novels were reviewed together in a famous number of the *Quarterly*. But, while Thackeray's work was not at all affected by the great changes which had taken place during his life in the political, social, and religious conditions of his country, the new writers were profoundly moved by the change of the old order, and derived their inspiration, not from their love of a past or passing age, but from their interest in the convulsions which they saw round them.

The Victorian novel.

§ 2. The first of these novelists was CHARLOTTE BRONTË, whose name is inseparable from those of her sisters, EMILY and ANNE BRONTË. The story of their lives, which reflected itself in their writings, is one of the famous romances of biography, and may be sketched very briefly. Their family was originally Irish, and

CHARLOTTE BRONTË (1816–1855).

the real form of their name seems to have been Prunty. Their father, however, was educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, took Holy Orders, and eventually became vicar of Haworth, a moorland parish in the wild uplands of the West Riding. He himself was an eccentric man of considerable talent, but the verses which he published under the title of *Cottage Poems* (1811) are of a very ordinary kind. Two of his daughters died when they were little more than infants, but had already shown great precocity; the three remaining girls and their brother, Branwell Brontë, grew up among the sombre and bare scenery of Haworth, and assimilated much of its sternness and melancholy. Charlotte was sent with her two elder sisters to a school for the daughters of poor clergy at Cowan's Bridge. The unhealthy situation and bad management of the place were the cause of an epidemic to which the two elder girls fell victims. Charlotte herself nearly succumbed, but was taken away in time. Her education, however, was completed away from home, while her two younger sisters were brought up almost entirely at Haworth. The brother, of whose genius perhaps too much has been said, was clever and erratic, and, under the unwise training of a father who was certainly not altogether sane, became a source of constant anxiety to his family, and died under very melancholy circumstances. Charlotte and Emily went to Brussels to qualify as governesses, but constitutional weakness and other causes brought them back to Haworth. In 1846 the three sisters, using the pseudonyms of Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell, published their *Poems*, which, with the exception of some pieces by Emily, are quite worthless. Of the novels which almost immediately followed, the longest was Anne's interesting but very immature *Tenant of Wildfell Hall*. Her *Agnes Grey* and Charlotte's *Professor* have very little distinction; but Emily's *Wuthering Heights*, extravagant as it is, is of a different order. Neither Emily nor Anne were to write anything more; the fate which had robbed their household of a mother and two sisters laid its hand on them. In 1847 Charlotte published *Jane Eyre*; in 1848 and 1849 the deaths of Branwell, Emily, and Anne, followed one on the other. Charlotte herself was reprieved for a few years, in which she published *Shirley* (1849) and *Villette* (1852). In 1854 she married the Rev. Arthur Bell Nicholls, her father's curate, and in 1855 she died.

This extraordinary chapter of misfortunes, with its wild and picturesque circumstances, has doubtless contributed to the reputation of so unusual a family. Charlotte, however, wrote three very remarkable books whose very faultiness has something great in it. *Jane Eyre*, the most sensational and least probable of the three, is at the same time the best, for *Shirley* and *Villette* are both inclined to relapse here and there into heaviness, while *Jane Eyre* is never dull and always powerful. The

"Jane Eyre" (1847).

knowledge of life displayed in the book is defective. Miss Brontë, in her frequent absences from home, had learned very little of her fellows, and the shyness which, in her and her sisters, was a marked and not very agreeable feature, amounted to self-concentration. In *Jane Eyre* she was at her best where she was autobiographical; where she resorted to her imagination she became outrageous, and only an extraordinary force and vividness redeemed her from positive silliness. The story depends upon the passion of a poor governess for her master. Mr. Rochester, the hero of the book, is an incarnation of brute force and unrestrained temper, and the heroine's affection for him has a morbid and disagreeable tinge. The morality of the central episode of the book is, moreover, very unusual, although it is scarcely open to the charges which were laid against it at the time. Much of it is absurd, conceived in the irregular spirit of wildly sentimental romance; some of it is beneath criticism. But the figure of Mr. Rochester, with all its glaring improbability, is the work of a strong hand, and there is something deliberate in its very extravagance. He and his extraordinary household belong to a world of their own; but, fantastic as they are, the reader can hardly fail to see in them something better than a ghostly outline. Mr. Rochester is an exaggeration of the Byronic type of hero, the angel who has fallen wilfully and lives on the reputation of his fall; but his attitudes and forced misanthropy culminate in an admirably tragic spectacle, when, blind, and in the dusk of his fortunes, he is found by the faithful woman who has renounced everything for his love. This strange story, so untrue to life and yet so moving, is surrounded by episodes of a less turbulent nature. The household of St. John, in which Jane takes refuge after her flight from her master, is a beautiful sketch of peaceful domestic life, and St. John himself, if very much idealised, is an amiable contrast to Mr. Rochester; while the opening scenes of the book, with their fairly accurate picture of Miss Brontë's schooldays at Cowan's Bridge, are an excellent example of that acute sense of the grotesque which was closely akin to her love of grim sensation. Her humour, such as it was, appears more definitely in *Shirley*, which is drawn almost entirely from her experience of Yorkshire life, and, without a particle of grace or genuine playfulness, belongs to the Austenian type of novel. The heroine is modelled upon the stern and uncompromising character of Emily Brontë, and the dominant note of the book is sad and pessimistic. *Villette*, which is a very faithful picture of Brussels as the two sisters knew it, is artistically an advance upon its predecessors, and shows a marked improvement in a style that needed considerable attention. It is, however, little better than a variation of the love-story of *Jane Eyre*. The upright, unattractive heroine is another Jane, and the professor

"Shirley" (1849) *and* *"Villette"* (1852).

who commands her devotion is a Rochester purged of his more violent eccentricities. The romance is probable, and its surroundings are very real; but the interest is not uniformly sustained, and the novel suffers from the artistic blemish of an uncertain *dénouement*. *Villette* has received great praise from enthusiasts, and doubtless shows a far greater command of expression than *Jane Eyre*, but, to the more impartial reader, the defects of the earlier novel show as great a genius as the virtues of the later.

Anne Brontë's novels may be passed by without any remark. *Wuthering Heights*, however, the sole novel of Emily Brontë, is the most remarkable work of fiction written by any of the sisters. None of the family were amiable, and Emily seems to have been the least amiable of all. She had absolutely nothing of Charlotte's talent for describing the more usual features of life. *Wuthering Heights* is a grim and ghastly romance which contains no character that can be called pleasant or sympathetic. Taking for her scene a Yorkshire moor, she filled a few square miles with the most repulsive and selfish people that are to be found in any novel. The hero is not, like Mr. Rochester, a person who has allowed his excellent impulses to degenerate; he is naturally wicked and Satanic, and, from the moment of his appearance as an infant foundling to the final hour of his impenitent death, he is faithful to his worse nature and blights the lives of all around him. The superficial resemblance between the style of this book and that of *Jane Eyre* is very strong, and both novels succeed in giving reality to perfectly improbable stories; but the vivid horror of *Wuthering Heights* is a greater achievement than the romantic mystery of *Jane Eyre*. It is more than likely that, had Emily Brontë lived, her writing would have become inferior; she might have produced books no better than Anne Brontë's *Wildfell Hall*, which never convinced a single reader. She had, at all events, none of that sweetness which came forth, albeit sparingly, out of Charlotte's strength. But the praise which has been lavished upon her, rather to the disparagement of her sister, is justified in one particular. *Wuthering Heights* is the one novel in English which is great because it is sensational; its art is a triumph of sensation. And, of the three sisters, Emily Brontë shows the greatest individuality and retains the strongest traces of those inherited peculiarities and that barren and lonely environment whose influence is seen more or less in all their novels.

EMILY JANE BRONTË (1818–1848). "*Wuthering Heights*" (1847).

§ 3. The strenuous and uncouth art of the Brontës stands in curious contrast to the placidity and womanliness of ELIZABETH CLEGHORN GASKELL (*née* Stevenson), Charlotte Brontë's biographer and elder by six years. Mrs. Gaskell was born in Chelsea and died in Hampshire, but the greater part of her life was spent in Man-

MRS. GASKELL (1810–1865).

chester, where her husband was a Unitarian minister. She is thus, so far as her best read books are concerned, the novelist of the Lancashire manufacturing towns, as the Brontës are the novelists of the Yorkshire moorlands. *Mary Barton* (1848) was the first novel of the Victorian era which concerned itself with social problems. It still reads as freshly as when it was written, and is full of those high qualities which never left its authoress—a power of vivid description combined with a very charming and flexible style, a sense of humour which never led its mistress into unkind satire, and a pathos which was never ignoble or merely sentimental. These appeared again in a very different book, *Cranford* (1853), a series of sketches from the life of a provincial town, which are worthy of a place beside Miss Mitford's *Our Village*. The original of *Cranford* was the Cheshire market-town of Knutsford. Here again a very prominent place was given to a pathos which, although it did not spare itself, never degenerated into nonsense. *Ruth* (1853), another Lancashire story, appeared a little before *Cranford*, and was followed at intervals by three long novels. *North and South* (1855), a third romance of labour, appealed forcibly, like *Mary Barton*, to the sympathy of Englishmen on behalf of the cotton operatives, by using the effective motive of an English girl who, bred in a country vicarage far from great manufacturing towns, goes to live in a northern city and learns to appreciate the utter contrast between her two homes and their conditions of life. In *Sylvia's Lovers* (1863) Mrs. Gaskell turned from Lancashire to the Yorkshire coast, and wrote a very pathetic romance of a fishing-town, in which she continued to touch slightly on social and political problems. Her last novel, *Wives and Daughters* (1866), which appeared in the *Cornhill*, and unfortunately was left incomplete by her death, has no political reference or purpose other than the ardent love of simple and unpretending virtue, which is the great feature of all her work. *Wives and Daughters* is rather too minute and too long to be her best book as a whole, but none of her charming female portraits is quite equal to Molly Gibson. In the contrasted figure of Cynthia Kirkpatrick, the shallow girl with worldly aims and little capacity for affection, she showed a power of discrimination and impartial criticism which marks out a special place for her among novelists; while the social satire in her picture of Mr. and Mrs. Gibson is not unworthy to be compared with Miss Austen's picture of Mr. and Mrs. Bennet. *Wives and Daughters* is closely allied to *Cranford*, but it is more nearly related to Miss Austen than to Miss Mitford. It would be more correct to say that Mrs. Gaskell, while imitating neither very closely, adopted a method which united Miss Austen's knowledge of human nature to Miss Mitford's accuracy of detail, and brought to it a tenderness and humanity all her own. A less resolute artist than either, she had a breadth of sympathy which Miss

Mrs. Gaskell's place in the history of fiction.

Austen never showed and Miss Mitford had not the opportunity of possessing. She was the pioneer of the definitely philanthropic novel which, in our own day, is become so common, but her philanthropy did not spoil her books as works of art or check her quiet but omnipresent humour. Some of her shorter stories are perfect masterpieces. Her admirers usually reckon *Cousin Phyllis* (1865), one of her last writings, the crowning point of her art. It is, at all events, certain that Mrs. Gaskell deserves far more attention from novel-readers than she ordinarily receives, not only as the first writer who struck the exclusively Victorian note in fiction—for *Jane Eyre*, a year older than *Mary Barton*, while it marks a new epoch, retains traces of the old—but as the mistress of an art which, borrowing much from preceding novelists, managed to imitate their virtues without copying their faults, and possesses, at the same time, its own individual excellence of style and manner.

GEORGE ELIOT (1819–1880).

§ 4. GEORGE ELIOT is the famous name under which Marian Evans chose to address the world. The daughter of a land-steward at Arbury in Warwickshire, she came from the same county and sprang from the same social stock as Shakespeare. As a representative of the upper middle class, standing on the borderland between the country gentleman and the yeoman, she was well fitted to interpret the characters of both classes, and her natural genius and power of observation raised her to a position among English novelists which was partly helped, partly hindered, by her extraordinary and, for the most part, self-acquired culture. With each type of humanity which was to be found in the Midlands during her youth, from the labouring peasant to the squire and his family, she felt a deep and strong kinship, and in the charm of her earlier and more spontaneous writings she will long preserve for Englishmen an almost perfect image of the lives and characters of Midland folk during the first half of the nineteenth century. Her work, even in its aberrations, is admirable; in this respect it is matchless. Indeed, her place in literature is due to the success with which she drew, as no one else hitherto had drawn, vivid and richly-coloured pictures of the simple and robust lives that men lived in the heart of England just at the time when the conditions that made them possible were passing away for ever. She entered the field of domestic humour and pathos in which Miss Brontë and Mrs. Gaskell had already worked, the first tentatively, the second unassumingly, and sowed seed that bore a splendid harvest.

Early studies in philosophy.

Her thoughts were turned from the beginning to the profession of letters, and, at an early period of her life, her talents were directed into a line of work which left an important trace in her subsequent novels. When she was twenty her father went to live at Coventry. She met there with some Unitarians who

were much impressed by the "advanced" philosophy of German thinkers, and, adopting their opinions very readily, she translated Strauss' *Leben Jesu* and other books of the same kind into English, and contributed several articles in general harmony with their opinions to *The Westminster Review*. Her fondness for these and kindred subjects remained with her to the last, but the old leaven of the faith which she had learned in her childhood remained also and affected her work equally. This blending of the new with the old, of the scientific and heterodox spirit with a large and unforced sympathy for traditional beliefs and time-worn usages—for all things, in fact, that custom and the reverence of generations had made sacred, was a vital fact in her spiritual nature and gives a unique interest to her work.

She was already in her thirty-seventh year when, at the instigation of her friend and companion, George Henry Lewes, she began to write fiction. *The Sad Fortunes of Amos Barton* (1857) appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine*, and was the first of the sketches which were collected in the *Scenes of Clerical Life* (1858). In the new writer, the "George Eliot" whose real identity was unknown even to the editor of *Blackwood*, the better critics of an age which was just emerging from a sterile interval of bad criticism began to recognise gradually a genius of unusual power and breadth and to see in the *Scenes of Clerical Life* infinite promise of great things to come. But this recognition was by no means general, for there was much in the structure of the tales and their mode of thought which could not but startle and even offend the taste and sentiments of the hour. The curiosity which was felt concerning the writer had not quite died away, when, in January 1859, it was quickened by the publication of the more ambitious *Adam Bede*, a brilliant study of the tragic and comic elements which lie beneath the surface of rustic life. Yet even this novel, whose surpassing excellence has won it, with the growth of years, a marvellous popularity, received no enthusiastic welcome. Dickens was still writing and Thackeray seemed to be still in his prime, and readers could not at once force their palate to a fair relish of this new type of novel in which profound reflection joined hands with ripe scholarship and a rare faculty of observation. However, creations so fresh and winning as Mr Irwine and Mrs. Poyser could not be long resisted. The ruddy tints of English life, among the green pastures, sweet-smelling country lanes, sleepy farm-houses, and village homesteads of the Midlands, were too warm and natural to fail of their effect. More than this, thoughtful readers discovered that, in spite of a limited imagination, George Eliot possessed not a little of the broad Shakespearean view of human life, and that in her frequent digressions into analysis of motive there was a richness of wisdom and an insight into the springs of human nature

"Scenes of Clerical Life" (1858).

"Adam Bede" (1859).

which had not been found since the days of Fielding and the introductory prefaces of *Tom Jones*. *Adam Bede* found its way to the English heart and obtained a place from which it is not likely to be dislodged. The secret of authorship was well kept. A gentleman who lived near Nuneaton was for a time identified with the modest genius, and had almost accepted the belief himself when the veil was gradually withdrawn.

The Mill on the Floss (1860), whose scene was borrowed from the Trent-side town of Gainsborough in Lincolnshire, carried the author's fame still higher. The earlier part of the book, pre-eminent in strokes of the noblest order of genius, justifies the opinion of those critics who have seen in it George Eliot's masterpiece, but the later chapters give an unexpected and perverse turn to the plot which robs it of its full value. Of George Eliot as a mistress of classic style and a great student of human nature there can be no manner of doubt, but, in the mechanical virtues of construction and composition, and in her radical conception of the novel, her very desire for perfection and her laborious pursuit of culture led her astray. The first indications of error are seen in the growing ambition of *The Mill on the Floss*. Yet the character and history of Maggie Tulliver, child, girl, and woman—in whom we are allowed to see something of the writer herself—the things "sad, high, and working," which form the element of her life, the play of light and shade on the ways, doings, and sufferings of every-day men and women, and a hundred other features of interest, enchain the attention and stir the emotions to a depth that few other works of prose fiction have reached. And the perfection for which George Eliot strove is certainly to be found in *Silas Marner* (1861), a perfect prose idyll, breathing of the meadows and relating the simple lives, loves, foibles, and frailties of simple country folk who live amid a healthy social order now effaced by progress. Since Perdita, there has been no more charming rustic heroine than Eppie Marner.

"The Mill on the Floss" (1860) *and "Silas Marner"* (1861).

Romola came next (1863). Its design and subject were something foreign to its author's genius and put her powers to a more severe test than anything she had yet attempted. If we make no allowance for the difficulties inherent in its plan, *Romola* must, of course, be inferior to *The Mill on the Floss*. Nevertheless, George Eliot, working totally outside her natural scope in attempting to reanimate a period whose habits of life and thought had nothing to do with the social peculiarities of Warwickshire and the Midlands, achieved one of those single triumphs which are veritable curiosities of literature. That scholarly class of readers which exalts the isolated *Esmond* above *Vanity Fair* will doubtless prefer *Romola* to *Adam Bede* or *The Mill on the Floss*. *Esmond* is certainly the only instance of any magnitude to which *Romola* can be likened ; and, in this comparison, we must keep in

"Romola" (1863).

mind that, while Thackeray wrote of the eighteenth century with a natural instinct to which study played a subordinate part, George Eliot wrote of the Italian Renaissance after a long course of reading which created and brought out an artificial instinct for the work. Her picture of Florence and Savonarola is undeniably impressive, and the book has its enthusiasts, but it smells too strongly of the lamp. In her next novel, *Felix Holt* (1866), she returned to the familiar ground of English life, but, in spite of much admirable writing, she hardly succeeded in maintaining the high level of her previous works. The days of the Reform Bill failed to kindle within her the same living interest as the days of the immediately preceding generation.

"Felix Holt" (1866).

By this time her pen had begun to move more slowly. It was not until 1872 that her next novel, *Middlemarch*, reached the public. This book reveals the secret of her slowness. A conscious and loftier purpose and a grander design necessitated a broader and more populous canvas and a more vigorous and steadily sustained effort. In *Middlemarch* we certainly find the old power and much more of it. We find a wonderful variety of strongly drawn characters and an abundance of calm energy, but hardly the same freshness and freedom; we seem to miss the old blithe, spontaneous movement, and, with it, some of the charm of the earlier books. In *Adam Bede* and *Silas Marner* the subject works its way, so to speak, through the author; in *Middlemarch* the author works her way through the subject. This remark applies with still greater force to her last and most elaborate novel, *Daniel Deronda* (1876), in which her visions of the greatness of the Jewish nation remind one of Disraeli's *Coningsby* or *Tancred*. Hard and excellent work is visible in every page; there is a great display of intellectual strength which always astonishes and often gives keen pleasure, but its constant demands on the reader's attention effectually preclude it from becoming popular, for it exacts a mental strain which is within the capacity of few. George Eliot was never wiser or more profound than in these two last books; her brilliant power of aphorism reached its full height. Yet these observations and reflections, which might be isolated into the most valuable of anthologies, gave the novels a singular heaviness and seriously injured their author's power of humorous expression. The burden of philosophy and culture cannot, it is true, conceal the manifold excellence of *Middlemarch*, one of the finest pictures of provincial society in any literature, but it casts its shadow completely over *Daniel Deronda*, and, indisputably great as the book is, its greatness as a novel may be challenged. The hero is a prig, and the human interest of his surroundings can appeal only to a limited class of readers. In both these last novels George Eliot's catholic spirit touched the sterner realities of life and drew within the range of its sympathy classes and

"Middlemarch" (1872) *and "Daniel Deronda"* (1876).

individuals which prejudice has included under a social ban, and this of itself has placed them among the weightier classics of fiction. Their pages, moreover, are crowded with beautiful or forcible types of manhood and womanhood—in *Middlemarch*, Dorothea Brooke, Caleb and Mary Garth, and Mrs. Cadwallader; in *Daniel Deronda*, Mr. Gascoigne, the Jew Mordecai, and the Grandcourts, husband and wife, do but stand out from large groups of figures, each of which is striking. But, although the trouble of reading them is amply rewarded, they can never be popular or widely read.

Miscellaneous work and verse.

The last word of George Eliot's philosophy was the book of essays called *The Impressions of Theophrastus Such* (1879), which, in its sketches of characteristics, follows the lines of the author whose name it borrows and of such writers as Overbury, Earle, and La Bruyère. She had strayed in time past into other paths than that of prose fiction, but never to the same excellent purpose. Poetry attracted her, and she did all that genius and toil could do to secure a position among the great poets of her country. In 1868 she published *The Spanish Gipsy*, a volume of verse that wanted little but the gift of song to make it a great poem. Throughout its pages we recognise the large heart, the ripe wisdom, the various knowledge, the luxuriance of imagery and illustration, the felicity and fulness of expression that distinguish George Eliot the novelist, but seldom the free-flowing force, the melody and glow inseparable from the idea of a poet. She has also given us many smaller poems, valuable for their profound matter and manner, with which we should be loath to part. Of these *Jubal*, *How Lisa Loved the King*, *Stradivarius*, and *Brother and Sister*—the last evidently a leaf from the history of her own early life—are especially noteworthy. *Theophrastus Such* was her last published work. Mr. Lewes, whose constant companion she had been for many years, died in 1878. In June 1880 she married Mr. John Walter Cross, her future biographer, and died at Chelsea on December 22nd of the same year.

Greatness of George Eliot.

The grand general feature that distinguishes George Eliot is a thoughtful, sympathetic, loving realism which rests on a deep natural feeling for the "kindly race of men" as its basis, and works in an element of knowledge and culture. Although this element permeates it and is to blame for a mistaken dogmatism and unconventionality of tone, disagreeable to many readers who take their fiction very seriously, it does not destroy its mellowness and kindliness. Of all modern writers, not excepting even Mr. Meredith, George Eliot watches the ways of men with the clearest and most faithful vision and the warmest sense of kinship; her breadth of culture gives distinctness and truth to the pictures to which her breadth of sympathy gives richness of colour and geniality. Her comprehensive charity embraces all

creatures; every living thing that passes under her gaze is not merely touched with the revealing light of the intellect, but is bathed in an atmosphere of love and tenderness. This is especially true of her earliest works; in them the most delightful, because honest and homely types of English humanity are preserved for future times in an element of thought and feeling that neither distorts nor dims, neither blurs nor makes indistinct. These works certainly place "clear images before our gladdened eyes." They do a vast deal more, but this chiefly; and in this, with its necessary implication of dramatic life and power, George Eliot is the lineal descendant of Shakespeare and Fielding, the two greatest masters of English fiction.

§ 5. In passing from George Eliot to ANTHONY TROLLOPE, we sink to a lower level of art and faculty, from consummate genius to admirable talent. Trollope's work is sound, wholesome, and genial; its quiet and true pictures of English life have a soft and winning, if somewhat tame and commonplace charm peculiar to themselves. The character of his writing was in no small measure the result of the circumstances of his life. Although born of a good family—his father was an Oxford man and a not very successful barrister, his mother was the authoress of *The Widow Barnaby*, and his elder brother wrote many novels—and educated at Winchester and Harrow, he was driven by his father's misfortunes to take a clerkship in the Post Office. He gradually rose to the position of surveyor, and, travelling much and living for more or less lengthy periods in various parts of England and Ireland, he mixed with and observed many local peculiarities and shades of individual character. His love of the hunting field, which amounted almost to a passion, added considerably to his opportunities of noticing the ways of men. For several years his literary attempts met with small encouragement, but struggling on with a methodical persistence which was arrested only by death, he at last contrived to make a palpable hit in *The Warden* (1855). The favour thus won was maintained by *Barchester Towers* (1857), a sequel to *The Warden*, and was never afterwards seriously imperilled. For a quarter of a century after this time he continued to produce untiringly a constant supply of modest and well-flavoured fiction, evenly flowing narratives of personal adventure, and an occasional slight biography, which appealed to and attracted readers of homely tastes. His method of writing was business-like and is sufficient proof of his want of genius. For several years no day passed without its allotted number of pages, nor did any pause in the regular and almost punctual birth of book after book give warning of flagging energy and failing materials. Among the fifty novels or so which were thus created, perhaps the most worthy of notice are *Doctor Thorne* (1858), *Framley Parsonage* (1861), *Orley Farm* (1862), *The Small House at*

ANTHONY TROLLOPE (1815–1882).

Allington (1864), and *The Last Chronicle of Barset* (1867). This last book concluded the Barchester series, which, more than any of his other books, made his reputation; but out of such an abundance and so distinct and almost fatal a tendency to uniformity of merit it is not easy to choose. Trollope had merit enough to leave room for him to sink below himself, and this he certainly did in *The Eustace Diamonds* (1873) and *Lady Anna* (1874). He carried to a barely warrantable extent a practice, which had been used very happily by Thackeray, of introducing successful characters over and over again into his books; but he had the art of toning down its wearisomeness. He was most at home in clerical circles, and there are few who can resent the constant recurrence of Archdeacon Grantley, Dean Arabin, Mr. Crawley, and Mrs. Proudie. Mr. Plantagenet Palliser of *Framley Parsonage*, with or without Lady Glencora his wife, is, as Duke of Omnium, the central or an important figure in *Can You Forgive Her?* (1864), *Phineas Finn* (1869), *The Prime Minister* (1876), and *The Duke's Children* (1880). Trollope also wrote several books of foreign travel and brief lives of *Cæsar* (1870) and *Thackeray* (1879). Hawthorne's verdict on Trollope is likely to be final: "His characters are just as real as if some giant had hewn a great lump out of the earth and put it under a glass case, with all its inhabitants going about their daily business, and not suspecting that they were made a show of." Trollope, however, was by no means a giant, unless we take his industry into account. He was an ingenious and pleasant worker in the domestic department of the novel, whose books are healthy and excellent reading, but have no intrinsic claim to immortality.

§ 6. The work of CHARLES READE, who was born a year before Trollope and was the oldest of the novelists mentioned in this chapter, was of a very different kind. Reade was the son of a country gentlemen at Ipsden in Oxfordshire, and, although called to the bar in 1843, never practised. At the same time he was fortunate enough to hold a fellowship at Magdalen, the most picturesque of Oxford colleges. However, there was little of the academic spirit in his nature or his work. A man of aggressive and inflammable temper, burning to redress social grievances and going about his work with no sense of the fitness of things, he was not seldom involved in war with his contemporaries. His novels began with the admirable sketch, *Peg Woffington* (1852), a story of the English stage, which was followed by *Christie Johnstone* (1853). In 1856 he made his mark in *It is Never Too Late to Mend*, a book which is typical of his eccentricities of construction and manner in the irritatingly abrupt sentences, the short paragraphs, the semi-dramatic method of dialogue (never really dramatic and often puerile), and numberless other childish tricks that appear over and over again. Like Dickens' books, Reade's novel had a social purpose, and aimed at some scheme

CHARLES READE (1814–1884).

of prison reform. The way in which he gathered and marshalled his details makes this and his succeeding novels extremely valuable to the student of English sociology. Thus *Hard Cash* (1863), which had appeared in *Household Words*, attacked the iniquities of private lunatic asylums with a directness and an amount of circumstantial knowledge that are almost as convincing as the figures in a blue-book and engross the reader's attention more successfully. In *Foul Play* (1869), which was written in partnership with the actor-dramatist Dion Boucicault, he wrote on the subject of unseaworthy ships, while in the admirable *Put Yourself in His Place* (1870) he went exhaustively into the subject of strikes and painted the life of a manufacturing town—Sheffield was his model—more unsparingly and even more vividly than Mrs. Gaskell. Other famous novels are *Griffith Gaunt* (1865) and *A Terrible Temptation* (1871). Of all it may be said that they groan under the eccentricities which so easily beset novels with a purpose, and under peculiarities of their own due to the combination of idealist and faddist in their author. But there is life in Reade's people, as figures like the generous Edward Dodd and the selfish, sensual Edith Archbold, both in *Hard Cash*, testify, while of the dramatic force of his scenes there can be no better instance than the bursting of the reservoir in *Put Yourself in His Place*. Nevertheless, Charles Reade is one of those writers whose masterpiece stands indubitably outside the general line of his work. If we doubt the pre-eminence of *Esmond* or *Vanity Fair* or of *Romola* over *The Mill on the Floss*, it needs no hesitation to declare that *The Cloister and the Hearth* (1861) is a far better novel than *It is Never Too Late to Mend*. The length of the book is something against it, but, as a faithful, entirely realistic picture of medieval life at a momentous epoch it has claims to be considered the best historical novel in English. It savours of Reade's idiosyncrasies, and, if it entered into comparison with *Esmond* or *Romola* on the ground of style, it would have very little chance. But Reade was a first-rate scholar and an omnivorous reader, who read to some purpose, and nothing more lifelike could be desired than his account of Gerard's tramp through Germany or of his experiences in Rome. Reade used Erasmus' *Colloquies* very liberally in his novel, and, in fact, applied them to the taste of modern readers. He pursued his work in no merely antiquarian spirit ; every passage has its bearing on modern life, its own modernity of tone. And, if Reade, like most impulsive authors, made serious slips from accuracy and was, in many of his books, unfair and partial, he may be trusted and thoroughly enjoyed in the vast field which he covered in *The Cloister and the Hearth*. Not every man who succumbs to so many disadvantages, an imperfect sense of proportion, a disagreeably jerky style, and an occasionally miraculous want of taste, is able to produce a masterpiece of so high a kind.

§ 7. Before proceeding further we should remark, as the chief disciple of Dickens, WILKIE COLLINS, the son and namesake of a painter. In speaking of Dickens we have said that his influence on literature was by no means great. But, although he was the spiritual father of no great novelist, he had many imitators, and of these Wilkie Collins, working through a sensational medium, was the most original and characteristic. He used a method of story-telling analogous to Browning's artistic method in *The Ring and the Book*, cutting up his tale into a series of narratives, each of which is told by a separate person from a new point of view. As these narratives, instead of throwing new light upon one special point, are continuous and follow one on the other, the method is unnecessary, even if it ensures variety, and the effect is often clumsy. Collins, in common with most of his popular contemporaries, was very prolific, and wrote much that is more than ordinarily worthless ; but two novels, *The Woman in White* (1860) and *The Moonstone* (1868), stand out above the rest. In neither case did he follow Dickens' system of assailing abuses, but wrote an excellent romantic story on the general lines laid down by his master. *The Woman in White* follows Dickens in his pathetic and mysterious manner, and, without much that is noteworthy in its character-drawing, save the well-nigh immortal figure of Count Fosco, sustains its interest wonderfully well. *The Moonstone*, a rather more complicated and disjointed story, founded on a not dissimilar mystery, has an array of excellent *dramatis personæ*. The narratives of Gabriel Betteredge and Drusilla Clack are good specimens of Collins' quiet humour and satire, and, as a frankly sensational episode, the tragedy of the Shivering Sand has considerable merit. Moreover, *The Moonstone* has a literary character which belongs to no other of Collins' stories ; the style is clear and pleasant and is free from pretension or unnecessary affectations. We should also remember *No Name* (1862), a powerful novel only a little inferior to these.

WILKIE COLLINS (1824–1889).

§ 8. The reputation of CHARLES KINGSLEY rests upon a very remarkable versatility, which attacked many subjects, but chiefly on his novels. He was born at Holne, the most romantic spot on the upper reaches of the Dart. His father, a Hampshire squire, had taken Orders in his riper years, and, after some clerical work in Devonshire and the Fen country, became rector of Clovelly and eventually of St. Luke's, Chelsea. Charles Kingsley, in his youth, showed a moderate affection for work and the playground, but a hearty love of the pastimes of the open sea and country, which was accompanied by a delight in local tradition and history, and by some ability for original composition, whether in verse or poetic prose. Although he continued to show this irregular preference at King's College, London, and Magdalene College, Cambridge, he nevertheless

CHARLES KINGSLEY (1819–1875).

obtained a first-class in the classical tripos of 1842. He was already possessed by that "divine discontent" which was to animate his whole career; but, in the same year, he took Holy Orders without perceptible misgiving, and went as curate to Eversley in Hampshire. In 1844 he became rector of the parish, and remained there till his death, thirty-one years later. For some years he held a stall in the Collegiate Church of Middleham. In 1869 he received a canonry at Chester, and in 1873 was promoted to a residentiary stall at Westminster. Bringing to his parochial work a spirit of high endeavour, formed under the influence of Coleridge, Carlyle, and F. D. Maurice, he entered on his task of helping men by practical effort, sermons, and literary work, to make themselves wiser, better, and happier, with a zest that was the outcome, partly of natural temperament, partly of passionate conviction. Nor was ever spirit less ascetic or puritanical. He gave the importance of a moral force to a large, free, healthy appetite for the invigorating enjoyments of body and mind, and for every form of manly exercise. To this almost dogmatic athleticism in religion was applied, not without a taunt at first, the name of "muscular Christianity."

His *début* as an author was marked by his advocacy of unconventional doctrine. His first book was *The Saint's Tragedy* (1848), a dramatic poem on the life of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, which he made the text of thoughts on life and society differing entirely from ordinary opinion. The Chartist agitation and its obvious causes, working upon his strong sensibility to the sorrows and sufferings of the poor, made him an apostle of the system which, after various modifications, is still known as Christian Socialism. The fruit of this is seen in his two earliest novels, the very interesting *Yeast* (1851), which, in addition to its suggestions of social regeneration, contains many beautiful descriptive passages, and *Alton Locke* (1850), the story of a Chartist tailor and poet. These books, of the utmost value to the historical student, who sees in them a pregnant commentary on the great political and religious agitations of their decade, were succeeded by a riper and far more artistic type of novel. Kingsley's opinions brought him into collision with more orthodox Churchmen, and he soon abandoned his militant standpoint for a more chastened and more effective advocacy of his convictions. *Phaethon, or Loose Thoughts for Loose Thinkers* (1852), was his latest definite pronouncement on his socialistic ideals, but their spirit never left him.

Kingsley's early verse and novels.

In 1853 he published a book which was a foretaste of his peculiar quality in prose and the first proof of his historical talent. *Hypatia*, taking as its groundwork the tragic story of the gentle victim of fifth-century fanaticism, expanded into an imaginative reproduction of an extinct society and age in which it

Chief novels, etc. (1853-1860).

was not hard to discover a warning to the present. *Alexandria and her Schools* (1854), a series of lectures originally delivered at Edinburgh, followed *Hypatia* in natural sequence. *Glaucus, or the Wonders of the Seashore* (1855), has a title that tells its own tale. About the same time came *Westward Ho!* (1855), a noble romance of the Armada period, which, in its idealisation of the Elizabethan sea-kings, preached the most effective of sermons, albeit the text owed not a little to the imagination, on behalf of muscular Christianity. It is one of those fortunate books which have deserved and obtained immense popularity. Two years later he sought, in *Two Years Ago* (1857), to create out of passing events a picture as vivid and inspiring as those which he had already drawn from the long past, but with hardly the same success. Next year his poem of *Andromeda* (1858), the most successful experiment which has been made in the English hexameter, appeared in the same volume with the bulk of the songs and lyrical ballads that give him his actual place among English poets.

Kingsley as professor.

In 1860 Kingsley was appointed Regius Professor of History at Cambridge, and held the office until 1869, discharging his duties with all the fervour and nervous energy of his character, but adding nothing to his reputation. Several of his professorial courses were published. The lectures on *The Ancien Régime* (1867), which were given in London, were equally popular. But Kingsley, picturesque and interesting here as everywhere, was unfit by temperament for serious historical work, and was here and there guilty of flagrant inaccuracies. A reckless statement brought him into conflict—this was in 1864—with Dr. Newman, and a sharp encounter left him, to the mortification of his friends, decidedly worsted. On the whole, the nine years of his professorship form the turning-point in his career. Even in his own special field he showed signs of declining power. *The Water Babies* (1863) is a prose fantasy of rare originality and charm, exhibiting some of his best qualities in perfection, but it was the last book which he wrote with his old familiar ease. *Hereward the Wake* (1866), which appeared as a serial in *Good Words*, good though it is, is manifestly inferior to *Westward Ho!* It was his adieu to prose fiction, and now he turned his attention to the pursuit of science, which had always attracted him, and to his undying interest in social questions. After the publication of *The Hermits* (1868) he gave up historical writing. As a scientific writer—in his *Town Geology* (1872), for example—he veiled the true spirit of his subject beneath the spirit of the man of letters and a moral teacher.

Sermons and death.

From first to last Kingsley was a great preacher, and his published sermons have been widely read, and have had their influence on many minds. Fully a dozen collections appeared in quick succession and under several titles —*Village Sermons* (1849), *The Good News of God*

(1859), *Town and Country Sermons* (1861), etc. His terms of residence at Chester and Westminster gave him a great opportunity, which he did not fail to use. Almost his last publication was a volume of *Westminster Sermons* (1874). His health, however, compelled him to make frequent journeys to other parts of Europe and the world, and a Christmas spent in the West Indies gave birth to a delightful book of travel, *At Last* (1871), which bears the stamp of its author's genius on every page. In addition to these various works Kingsley's miscellaneous publications and journalistic articles were very numerous, and some were subsequently broken up and redistributed. *Plays and Puritans* (1873), is perhaps the most noticeable. After a tedious illness he died at Eversley in January, 1875. His loss was widely and sincerely mourned.

Characteristics.

As an artist, in the full sense of the word, Kingsley's power was limited. He is not one of the great masters of nineteenth-century prose; his very earnestness and energy prevented him from being more than striking and forcible. Yet in pure objective description his use of colour is very exceptional. *Westward Ho!* and *At Last* teem with pictures which it is impossible to forget. But it is his manly strength as a novelist and his native force as a poet that give him his firm hold upon the affections of the young and generous. Himself a frank, high-spirited, eager-hearted boy all his life long, he is naturally loved by boys and the boyish-hearted of every age; his enthusiasm for valour and daring in the past, his unreserved acceptance of the conditions of modern life, his faith in God, his tremendous optimism, and the "big manly voice" with which he proclaimed them all, act in youth as a trumpet-call to all strenuous, honest endeavour to do, dare and suffer with courage and endurance. He is the Greatheart of our nineteenth-century literature, an undesponding guide and stimulus where help and fortitude are deeply needed. The gradual alteration and progress of life will doubtless displace him from this position. But *Westward Ho!* will always remain a great landmark in the field of historical romance. Nor can time or circumstance have any power over a considerable fraction of his verse. *Andromeda* and several of his smaller pieces—*The Sands of Dee*, *The Three Fishers*, and *Lorraine Lorree*, among the rest—must outlast every changing fashion in poetry.

The modern novel.

§ 9. Most of the novelists whom we have mentioned in this chapter are comparatively recent, and all of them, save the Brontës and Mrs. Gaskell, survived into the present generation. All of them, with the sole exception of Wilkie Collins, whose name is included here only because it seems to deserve some special prominence among the novelists of the second rank, have exercised an influence in letters and English thought and have won a definite position on the roll of fame. Their successors are still spared to us. In

the hands of Mr. George Meredith the novel has added to its prestige during forty years of brilliant and unabated energy. Under the care of Mr. Thomas Hardy English fiction has been enriched by a series of powerful tragedies whose dramatic unity of spirit and action is almost Greek in its closely knit concentration; while their feeling for nature is of a kind purely pagan. The influence of France, working partly through an American medium, has produced a crop of short stories and episodes which, in their minute construction and the elaborate anxiety of their style, form one of the most noteworthy features in present-day fiction. The great novelists of to-day are, however, elderly men who have written for many years. By a strange irony of fate, the youngest and not the least promising of them all, ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON, died, after a strange life of adventure and a meteoric success, when he was only forty-four. He was the son of the engineer whose lighthouses are the glory of the British seaboard, and was a Scot by birth and by passionate attachment. He studied without much academical profit at Edinburgh University, was called to the bar, and led a vagrant life in search of health, full of a fresh curiosity toward everything that he saw, and writing essays and novels with the loving pains of a true literary artist. His first books, the *Inland Voyage* of 1878 and the *Travels with a Donkey* of 1879, were not only charming impressions of little tours which deserved to be recorded if only for their eccentricity, their style was a new thing, dealing in forcible and sometimes rather too exquisite and far-fetched phrases and words, and producing, in spite of its artificiality, a wonderfully harmonious effect of form and colour. A number of magazine articles which he had contributed to the *Cornhill* were bound up in *Virginibus Puerisque* (1881) and *Familiar Studies of Men and Books* (1882), the first a collection of thoughtful essays on various subjects, the second a series of various and admirable criticisms. *Virginibus Puerisque*, its exquisite successor *Memories and Portraits* (1887), and a third volume of casual essays and travel-sketches, *Across the Plains* (1892), admitted the reader freely into the writer's confidence and gave the world the opportunity of acquainting itself with a most fascinating personality. These books, easy and delightful to read, full of a genial and hopeful, although not very practical, philosophy, were the main factor in winning for Stevenson the enthusiasm of a very large coterie, and giving him an importance quite out of proportion to his age and experience. Their merits, their picturesqueness and vivacity, are amazing, but his painful quest of the right phrase and his love of words as words led Stevenson into almost constant affectation and artificial force of manner, which soon cloys the taste. The ever-present sense of effort does not always bring with it the conviction of success; indeed, Stevenson falls, as a rule, just short of his mark.

R. L. STEVENSON (1850–1894).

The style of these books, whose great charm renders their defects pathetic rather than culpable, is found again in the mass of fiction which Stevenson left behind. His first stories, the fantastic and subtly humorous *New Arabian Nights* (1882), were collected and reprinted from the now defunct magazine called *London*. These grotesque sketches, which showed the marks of a very fertile and somewhat morbid imagination, did not attract general attention, and it was not until the appearance of the pirate story of *Treasure Island*, at the end of 1882, which had been published as a serial in a boys' magazine, that Stevenson's name became recognised as a writer of fiction. Even then he was regarded by most people as a writer for schoolboys, and his purely literary claims were overlooked by the admirers of his invention. *Treasure Island* was followed in 1885 by *Prince Otto*, a fantasy which clearly owed its inspiration to Mr. Meredith, and, in the same year, *A Child's Garden of Verses* added a fresh contribution to the record of Stevenson's versatility and originated the fashion of writing children's poems in a manner which appeals principally to their elders. In 1886 appeared the thin pamphlet containing the history of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, a little masterpiece supplementary to the *New Arabian Nights*. About the same time *Kidnapped* (1886) followed up and improved upon the line of romance which had been inaugurated by *Treasure Island*. Since that day this breathless tale of adventure, a semi-historical narrative of the most stirring period of the eighteenth century, has had its thousands of readers, and David Balfour and Alan Breck have taken their place cheek by jowl with Scott's heroes. The distinctly boyish tone, evident through the polish of eighteenth-century style with which Stevenson elaborated his book, is still prominent in *The Black Arrow* (1888), a romance of the Two Roses. Between *Kidnapped* and this book came a volume of verses (1887) called, in imitation of Ben Jonson, *Underwoods*, to which, in 1890, was added a book of *Ballads*. Stevenson's verses are always fair, but he was never more than a minor poet.

Beginning of Stevenson's fiction.

The book which redeemed him in the general eye from his reputation as a teller of juvenile tales, was the really great romance, *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889), in which he showed his full capacity for invention and the creation of character combined with an excellence of style and a dramatic power far beyond the comprehension of schoolboys. Four years later *Catriona* (1893), the sequel to *Kidnapped*, reached an even higher level of construction and style, which indicated a way of escape from his early mannerisms and involuntary affectation. However, delicately firm as is the treatment of *Catriona*, and although it combines the superficially hostile elements of romantic narrative and elaborate analysis of character in perfect harmony, it contains no character equal to James Durie, nor any scene

"The Master of Ballantrae" and later work.

which can compare with the garden duel in *The Master of Ballantrae*. Stevenson, even before *Ballantrae*, had been working in collaboration with members of his family; he had written with his wife *The Dynamiter* (1885), a delightful series of preposterous tales forming a second volume of the *New Arabian Nights*; and with his son-in-law, Mr. Lloyd Osbourne, he produced a whimsical tale called *The Wrong Box* (1888), and two stories of South Sea adventure, *The Wrecker* (1892), and *The Ebb Tide* (1894), both of them possessing extraordinary merit and worked out in a spirit of sheer realism. Their naturalistic fidelity is even surpassed in Stevenson's unassisted *Beach of Falesá*, the first and longest of three tales known collectively as the *Island Nights' Entertainments* (1893). For the most part these stories of the Pacific were written at Samoa, where Stevenson had settled after his long wanderings, living in something like the state of a native chieftain, and doing his best to alleviate the civil troubles so well described in his *Footnote to History* (1893). At the end of 1894 he died suddenly, and was buried, under circumstances as romantic as any which he himself had imagined, on a mountain-top near his villa. But, although he had devoted so much of his later work to the archipelago which he had chosen for his residence, he was still faithful to romance and his native country. *Catriona* came across the sea to England; and, a little before his death, he was engaged on *St. Ives*, the romance of a French prisoner in Edinburgh Castle. This, however, he abandoned to begin a new novel, *Weir of Hermiston*, which was stopped by death. The fragment published in 1896 is long enough to show that in this book, a novel of Scottish character deeply tinged with romance, he would have surpassed all his previous efforts. *St. Ives*, however, which was published, with a continuation by an ardent disciple, Mr. Quiller-Couch, in 1897, is certainly the least striking or memorable of his stories. A third posthumous book, the *Vailima Letters* (1895) to Mr. Sidney Colvin, added fresh information on Stevenson's private life and methods of work, and added a picturesque talent for letter-writing to the other items of his reputation.

Influence of Stevenson.

That this novelist, so prolific in spite of his youth, effected something like a revolution in the English novel, it is impossible to deny. Himself a lover of romance, heart and soul, a disciple of Scott and the elder Dumas, who turned his whole life into a kind of voluntary romance, living as few other men would dream of living, he came upon English life at a time when it was peculiarly susceptible to any commanding influence—when it was more ready than ever before to answer to the call of some striking personality. His work was to resuscitate the failing and well-nigh extinct spirit of romance in English fiction, to save it from degenerating into humdrum or merely photographic realism. He himself was capable of realistic writing. His book of stories, called *The Merry*

Men (1886), is proof enough that he could write short and vivid tales as well as long narratives; but, whether he treated, as in *Markheim*, a single episode in a few pages, or, as in *The Ebb Tide*, a sordid phase of life in a succession of chapters, he surrounded his work with an ideal atmosphere of romance which breathed all manner of suggestions for future work. Considered purely as a writer of stirring romance he is second only to Scott; while, as a novel of the last century and a masterly success in an archaic style, *Catriona* is worthy of comparison with *Esmond*. We can hardly wonder that he found not only admirers, but adorers; that his genius and influence have been made the subject of extravagant hyperbole. It is beyond the limits of this book to say how far the work of his imitators, the now countless tribe of minor historical novelists, and the Scottish writers who look to him as "the dear king of us all," will go; but it is certainly true that, rapidly but surely, at an age when few authors have published their first masterpiece, Stevenson brought about a not merely temporary change in the most characteristic and interesting department of his century's literature. It is of happy augury to the future of English literary history that its annals should for the present close with a name which represents all that was freshest and youngest and most fruitful for good in the writing of his time. So far is the record unrolled, and so far there is no dimness in its characters.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

MINOR NOVELISTS. 1850–1900.

CAROLINE CLIVE (1801–1873), *née* Meysey-Wigley, wife of the Rev. Archer Clive, Chancellor of Hereford Cathedral, deserves mention as the authoress of *Paul Ferroll* (1855) and *Why Paul Ferroll Killed his Wife* (1860)—two of the best sensational novels of the century. Mrs. Clive also wrote, earlier in life, a book of verse called *IX Poems by V.* (1840), which was succeeded by less remarkable volumes. Another novel, *John Greswold*, appeared in 1864.

CHARLES ALLSTON COLLINS (1828–1873), brother of Wilkie Collins and son-in-law of Charles Dickens, was a painter of the Pre-Raffaellite persuasion, but also wrote charming and humorous essays, and by *A Cruise on Wheels* and other works gained a deserved popularity with readers of fiction.

MORTIMER COLLINS (1827–1876), although almost exactly a contemporary of Wilkie and Charles Collins, and a prolific novelist, journalist, and writer of verse, was in no way connected with them. Nothing of his work retains much interest, but, as a man of considerable intellect who played an important figure in journalistic society, he deserves mention.

DINAH MARIA CRAIK (1826–1887), better known as MISS MULOCK, was the daughter of a dissenting minister at Stoke-on-Trent, and became the wife of a partner in the publishing house of Macmillan. Her first book, *The Ogilvies* (1849), found appreciative readers, who welcomed its successor, *Olive* (1850). With *John Halifax, Gentleman*

(1856), a novel not far below *Adam Bede* and *The Mill on the Floss*, she achieved a brilliant success. Mrs. Craik's pen was very ready, and was continually used with a high moral purpose. Unlike most serious and scrupulous moral writers, she was not blind to an appreciation of literary form. After *John Halifax*, criticism thinks best of *A Life for a Life* (1859), but others, such as *The Head of the Family* (1851) and *Agatha's Husband* (1853), deserve notice.

THOMAS HUGHES (1823–1896), Q.C., and sometime member of Parliament for Frome Selwood, was a man of one book—*Tom Brown's School-days* (1857)—which was a reminiscence of his school-days at Rugby, and has for its effectual hero Dr. Arnold. This, the most popular boys' book of the nineteenth century, ensured a hearing for the inferior *Tom Brown at Oxford* (1861). Mr. Hughes, who in 1882 became a County Court judge, wrote on many other subjects, but his works subsequent to *Tom Brown* are now beginning to be forgotten, and even *Tom Brown* has suffered of late years from a slight decline.

HENRY KINGSLEY (1830–1876), younger brother of Charles Kingsley, was educated at King's College School, London, and at Worcester College, Oxford. After five years spent at the Australian goldfields he returned to England, engaged in journalism and literary work, and was present at Sedan as a newspaper correspondent. Of several novels, the partly autobiographical *Geoffrey Hamlyn* (1859) and *Ravenshoe* (1862), which is admirable from the humorous point of view and deserves a long popularity, were the earliest and best.

GEORGE ALFRED LAWRENCE (1827–1876), the son of an Essex clergyman, a Rugby boy, a member of Balliol College, Oxford, and for some time a barrister, made something of a sensation among readers of fiction by publishing anonymously his novel of *Guy Livingstone, or Thorough* (1857), an unabashed glorification of strength whose morality was very doubtful. The notoriety of this work lasted for several years, and Lawrence took advantage of its popularity to add to it about a dozen others before he died. Of these *Sword and Gown* (1859) and *Brakespeare · Fortunes of a Free Lance* (1868) are fair examples.

ELIZABETH LINTON (1822–1898), *née* Lynn, and better known as MRS. LYNN LINTON, was the authoress of several novels and of a good deal of literature on the woman question. She was the wife of the engraver W. J. Linton. Probably the only one of her novels which is likely to "live" for any length of time is *The True History of Joshua Davidson, Christian and Communist* (1872), which has been much discussed by earnest social students.

GEORGE JOHN WHYTE-MELVILLE (1821–1878) was a gentleman of Fife, Eton boy, captain in the Coldstream Guards, and man of fortune, who eventually settled down to country-house life in Northamptonshire and Gloucestershire. He began his career as a novelist with *Captain Digby Grand* (1853), a book in the key which he struck so persistently and successfully all through. The life of the rich country-house and the hunting-field, of buoyant and boisterous association with horses and dogs, found in him a hearty and unflagging interpreter. *General Bounce* (1854), *Kate Coventry* (1856), and *Katerfelto* (1875), were all popular books, but the historical romances, such as *Holmby House* (1860), *The Queen's Maries* (1861), and *The Gladiators* (1863), are quite equal to them in another vein. Captain Melville's course was sadly but appropriately finished by a fall in riding over a ploughed field.

MARGARET OLIPHANT (1828–1897), *née* Wilson, was a native of Midlothian, and, through a long career of novel-writing, proved herself one of our best second-class novelists. It is unnecessary to mention here any special book, for there is not one which is not in some way typical of the rest. Her *Makers of Florence* (1876), and similar books on Venice, Edinburgh, and Rome, are

excellent storehouses of information, and her *Life of Edward Irving* is a model biography. Her last work was a history of the publishing house of Blackwood.

JAMES PAYN (1830–1898), born at Cheltenham and educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, was famous for many years as editor of *Chambers's Journal* and afterwards of the *Cornhill Magazine*, and as a very fertile and regular novelist. His best stories were *Lost Sir Massingberd* and *By Proxy*. The weekly *causerie* which, under the title of *My Note-Book*, he contributed for ten years to the *Illustrated London News*, was one of the very best features in recent journalism.

JAMES RICE (1843–1882), editor of *Once a Week* and author of a *History of the British Turf* (1879), is well known as the designer of the famous novel, *Ready-Money Mortiboy* (1872), in which his partner was Sir Walter Besant. The two wrote several successful novels, one of which, *The Golden Butterfly* (1876), has earned a claim to something like immortality. Their last joint novel, *The Seamy Side* (1888), maintains the reputation of its predecessors.

FRANCIS EDWARD SMEDLEY (1818–1864), a journalist and editor, published two admirable novels, *Frank Fairlegh* (1850) and *Lewis Arundel* (1852), which, although a little old-fashioned to-day, retain their freshness for most readers. They are both stories of boys and young men, written in a manner closely resembling Dickens', and full of good and genuine humour.

ROBERT SMITH SURTEES (1803–1864), in his "Jorrocks Papers" of the *New Sporting Magazine*, suggested the scheme of the *Pickwick Papers*. They were reprinted as *Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities* (1838), to which *Handley Cross* (1843), with illustrations by Leech, followed as a sequel. *Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour* (1853), *Ask Mamma* (1858), both illustrated by Leech, and *Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds* (1865), illustrated by Leech and "Phiz," were all worthy successors. These books, full of exquisite, if not especially delicate humour to the sportsman, are a little perplexing to the ordinary layman; but Leech's admirable drawings, which are among the best he did, afford an illuminating commentary on the text, and anyone who fails to catch the fun of the whole thing must be dull indeed.

MEADOWS TAYLOR (1808–1876), colonel in the Indian army and author of a valuable *Student's Manual of the History of India* (1870), wrote several novels, including the once famous *Confessions of a Thug* (1839), in which he put a very accurate knowledge of Thuggism to account.

THOMAS ADOLPHUS TROLLOPE (1810–1893), Anthony Trollope's elder brother, was a somewhat inconspicuous novelist but a very able historian. The greater part of his life was passed at Florence, and the great bulk of his writing was devoted to Italian subjects. His best known and most ambitious productions were *Paul the Pope and Paul the Friar* (1860) and a *History of the Commonwealth of Florence* (1865). In fiction he did not attain the vogue of his brothers, but *La Beata Marietta* (1862) and several other novels passed through several editions.

APPENDIX I.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF CHAUCER'S WORKS,

ARRANGED SO FAR AS THE SCANTY MATERIALS WILL ALLOW.

The chronological order of this list of Chaucer's authentic poems follows the arrangement adopted by Dr. Skeat in the prefaces to his *Students' Chaucer*, which has been collated with Dr. Furnivall's list in his "Trial Forewords to my Parallel-Text Edition of Chaucer's Minor Poems," published for the Chaucer Society in 1871, and with the exhaustive account of Chaucer's life and works in the late Bernhard Ten Brink's History of English Literature. These three authorities differ considerably in their assignment of dates to the poems, and in their estimate of their authenticity. While Dr. Skeat, for example, is inclined to attribute the first 1705 lines of the translation of *The Romaunt of the Rose*, contained in what is known as the Glasgow Manuscript, to Chaucer, Ten Brink denies that they are his, and puts the version which Chaucer is known to have made of that famous poem, at a later date than Dr. Skeat, on the internal evidence of this fragment, would give it. All three, however, agree substantially in their division of the author's life into three periods: (1) The period before 1372–3, when Chaucer was working principally upon French models; (2) the period after his Italian journey of 1372–3, when he turned his attention to the Italian writers; (3) the period from 1384 to his death, when the poems in which his original genius is paramount were produced —*The Legend of Good Women* and *The Canterbury Tales*. It will be noticed that, in the list, few positive dates are given, and many, where they are given, are marked with a query. Some are certain. *The Parlement of Foules*, for instance, was composed in honour of Richard II's marriage to Anne of Bohemia (1382). *The Hous of Fame* contains an allusion to Chaucer's appointment to a comptrollership of the Petty Customs (1382); and *The Legend of Good Women* is dedicated to the Queen, in acknowledgment of the licence (1385) which permitted him to appoint a deputy in his office. Many poems were composed at different times. *The Monkes Tale*, for example, is a patchwork whose various pieces belong to all three divisions of its writer's life. Other poems—*e.g. Palamon and Arcite*—were used as rough material for later works, and are to be found here and there in fragmentary forms.

First Period, till 1372–3.

1. *Romaunt of the Rose*, fragment A (ll. 1–1705) in Glasgow MS.
2. *An A B C.*
3. 1369. *The Book of the Duchesse.*
4. Parts of *The Monkes Tale.*

Second Period—1372–3–1384.

5. *The Clerkes Tale*, except 13 lines and Envoy.
6. *A Compleint to his Lady.*
7. *An Amorous Compleint, made at Windsor.*
8. *Womanly Noblesse* (ballade).
9. *The Compleynte unto Pité.*
10. *Anelida and Arcite.*
11. Original form of *The Tale of Melibeus* (prose).
12. ,, ,, *The Persones Tale* (prose).
13. ,, ,, *The Man of Lawes Tale.*
14. 1379? *The Compleynt of Mars.*
15. 1377–81. Translation of Boëthius (prose).
16. *The Former Age.* } Adapted from or suggested
17. *Fortune.* (Three ballades with Envoy.) } by Boëthius.
18. 1382. *The Parlement of Foules.*
19. 1379–83. *Troilus and Criseyde.*
20. *Chaucer's Wordes unto Adam, his owne Scriveyn.*
21. 1383–4. *The Hous of Fame.*

Third Period—1384–1400.

22. 1385–6. *The Legend of Good Women.*
23. 1386. Beginning of *The Canterbury Tales.*
24. 1387–8. Central Period of ,, ,,
25. 1389, etc. Continuation of ,, ,,
26. 1391. *A Treatise on the Astrolabe* (prose).
27. 1393? *The Compleynt of Venus.*
28. 1393. *Lenvoy de Chaucer à Scogan.*
29. 1396. *Lenvoy de Chaucer à Bukton.*
30. 1399. Envoy to *The Compleint of Chaucer to his Empty Purse.*

Minor poems, of uncertain date, possibly belonging to part of the second and third periods (1380–96).

31. *Merciles Beauté* (triple roundel).
32. *To Rosemounde* (ballade without envoy).
33. *Against Women Unconstant* (ballade without envoy).
34. *The Compleint of Chaucer to his Empty Purse* (ballade with envoy. See no. 30).
35. *Lak of Stedfastnesse* (ballade).
36. *Gentilesse* (ballade without envoy).
37. *Truth* (ballade).
38. *Proverbs of Chaucer.*

Lost and altered works are as follows :—

First Period—

39. Translation of Origen *Upon the Maudeleyne.*
40. *The Book of the Leoun.*
41. *Ceys and Alcioun*, a story retold in no. 3.
42. *Lyf of St. Cecyle*, adapted in *The Seconde Nonnes Tale.*
43. *Palamon and Arcite*, retold in *The Knightes Tale*; portions are worked into nos. 10, 18, and 19.
44. Translation from Pope Innocent III *Of the Wretched Engendring of Mankinde*; portions are worked into *The Man of Lawes Tale.*

APPENDIX II.

THE APPROXIMATE CHRONOLOGY OF SHAKESPEARE'S WORKS.

Play or Poem.	Probable Date of Production.	First Publication.
Venus and Adonis	{Written (?) 1585–7 [1]}	1593.
Love's Labour's Lost	1591 [2]	1598.
The Two Gentlemen of Verona	1591	1623 (1st folio).
Comedy of Errors	1591	1623 (1st folio).
Romeo and Juliet	1591 [3]	1597, 4to.
Henry VI, Part I (part)	March 3, 1592 [4]	1623 (1st folio).
,, ,, Parts II and III	1592 [5]	
Richard III	1592–3	1597, 4to.
,, II	1593	1597, 4to.
Lucrece	1593–4	1594, 4to.
Titus Andronicus	Jan. 23, 1594 [6]	(? 1594, 4to), 1600, 4to.
King John	1594	1623 (1st folio).
The Merchant of Venice	Aug. 25, 1594 [7]	{1600 (4to, 2 different editions).
A Midsummer-Night's Dream	1595 [8]	{1600 (4to, 2 different editions).
All's Well that Ends Well	1595 [9]	1623 (1st folio).
The Taming of the Shrew (part)	1595–6	1623 (1st folio).
Henry IV, Part I	1597	1598, 4to.
,, ,, ,, II	1597	1600, 4to.
The Merry Wives of Windsor	1597–8	1603, 4to (imperfect)
Henry V	1598	1600, 4to.
Much Ado About Nothing	1599	1600, 4to.
As You Like It	1599	1623, 1st folio.
Twelfth Night	1600 [10]	1623, 1st folio.
Sonnets	{Before 1598—after 1600 [11]}	1609, 4to.
Julius Cæsar	1601 [12]	1623, 1st folio.
Hamlet	1602 [13]	1603, 4to. [14]
Troilus and Cressida	? 1603 [15]	1609, 1st 4to.
Othello	Nov. 1, 1604 [16]	1622, 4to.
Measure for Measure	Dec. 26, 1604 [16]	1623, 1st folio.
Macbeth	1606	1623, 1st folio.
King Lear	Dec. 26, 1626 [17]	1608, 4to (2 editions).
Timon of Athens (part)	1607	1623, 1st folio.
Pericles (part)	1607–8	1608, 4to (imperfect).
Antony and Cleopatra	1608	1623, 1st folio. [18]
Coriolanus	1608-9	1623, 1st folio.
Cymbeline	1610–11 [19]	1623, 1st folio.
A Winter's Tale	May 15, 1611 [20]	1623, 1st folio.
The Tempest	1611 [21]	1623, 1st folio.
The Two Noble Kinsmen (? part)	1612	1634, 4to.
Henry VIII (part)	June 29, 1613 [22]	1623, 1st folio.

NOTES.

1. "The first heir of my invention"—*Dedication to the Poem.*

2. Various dates have been assigned from 1585 to 1594. The probable limits are 1589–91.

3. The Nurse says (I. iii.), "'Tis since the earthquake" (? of 1580), "now eleven years." Probably written towards the end of 1591 and produced in 1592.

4. At the Rose Theatre, by Lord Strange's company.

5. Robert Greene's (d. Sept. 3, 1592) *Groats-worth of Wit* contains the parody of the famous line, "Oh Tiger's heart wrapt in a woman's hide" (3 H. VI. i. 4).

6. By Lord Sussex's actors. Shakespeare's probable part in the piece was merely that of reviser, and therefore the evidence of style, which might be thought to point to an earlier date, goes for very little.

7. At the Rose, if it is the "Venesyon Comedie" which Henslowe then produced. Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* and the conspirator Roderigo Lopez (executed June, 1594) seem to have given Shakespeare suggestions for Shylock. The "Venesyon Comedie" was recast some years later into its present form, in which it forms one of the four great comedies of 1599–1600. All the best evidence (except Furnivall, who says (?)1596) is in favour of 1594.

8. Written to celebrate a marriage. The older theory is that this was Essex's marriage in 1590, but the date is far too early. Mr. Sidney Lee suggests either the marriage of Lucy Harington to Lord Bedford (Dec. 12, 1594) or of William Stanley, Earl of Derby (Jan. 24, 1595), both of which agree very well with the play. The evidence on behalf of the 1590 theory is founded on pure conjecture and is a good example of the futility of Shakespearean criticism in reading too closely between the lines.

9. Probably recast from an early play mentioned by Meres (*Palladis Tamia*, 1598) as "Love's Labour's Won," which has also been identified with *The Taming of the Shrew.*

10. Seen by John Manningham at the Middle Temple, Feb. 2, 1602; but not on that account a new play.

11. The Sonnets are mentioned by Meres in *Palladis Tamia* (1598) as "his" (*i.e.* Shakespeare's) "sugred Sonnets among his private friends." Some, therefore, must have been written before 1598. The greater part, if their autobiographical significance is allowed, must belong to 1600 or 1601. Meres' book, in its praise of Shakespeare, is the *locus classicus* for the names of the plays existing before 1598. It raised Shakespeare's fame, and publishers began to attribute spurious books to him—*e.g.* William Jaggard gave him the authorship of *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1599), which contains, among other things, Marlowe's *Passionate Shepherd*, and Edward Blount added, under his name, a poem called *The Phœnix and the Turtle* to Robert Chester's *Love's Martyr* (1601). *Venus and Adonis*, *Lucrece*, and the *Sonnets*, are the only genuine non-dramatic works of Shakespeare.

12. The allusion in Weever's *Mirror of Martyrs* (1601; see text, p. 190) may point to an even earlier date, as Weever's book had lain for two years in the press. But this is not substantiated by fact or internal evidence, unless we are to antedate all the previous places.

13. Hamlet (II. ii.) clearly refers to the quarrel of the older companies with the boy-actors of the Chapel Royal (1601).

14. The first 4to is imperfect, and was probably pirated. The second 4to (1604) is the first trustworthy text. The play was acted during the author's lifetime at Oxford and Cambridge.

15. All dates are very doubtful, and this seems the earliest possible. The general spirit of the play would seem to refer it with more likelihood to 1608, soon after *Antony and Cleopatra*.

16. Both plays acted at Court before James I (Malone's memoranda in Bodleian Library).

17. Before the Court at Whitehall (title-page of 4tos).

18. Licensed in Stationers' Registers, May, 1608, but not published.

19. Performance seen by Dr. Simon Forman in 1610–11.

20. Seen by Dr. Forman at the Globe on this date.

21. Produced (but not for the first time), with eighteen other plays by Shakespeare and others, at Court (1613), to celebrate Princess Elizabeth's wedding to the Palsgrave Frederick.

22. On the authority of Sir Henry Wotton, who notes the burning of the Globe Theatre owing to the firing of a cannon during the performance.

APPENDIX III.

THE POET-LAUREATESHIP.

From a very early period we have occasional glimpses of an officer attached to the English Court, whose function to some extent corresponded with that of our modern Laureate. The exact nature of his duties cannot be determined, nor is it clear what position he held among the rather brusque courtiers of the time—although it is clear that he was regarded with some consideration—but his existence cannot reasonably be doubted. Among the landowners recorded in Domesday Book, one Berdic, possessing three vills, is described as *Joculator Regis, joculator* being the Low Latin form of the Norman *jongleur*. Coming down to later times we obtain still clearer indication of such an official's existence. William the Foreigner is taken to Palestine by King Richard for the express purpose of celebrating his master's heroic deeds; Baston, the Carmelite friar, follows Edward II into Scotland; and a certain John Kaye is mentioned as versifier (versificator) in Edward IV's reign. He is considered by some to have been the first Poet Laureate in the present sense of the word.

The term, however, did not make its first appearance until the fourteenth century, and was then used in two senses, distinct not only from each other, but also from the present sense. In one it was applied simply to a person who had taken a particular degree at the Universities; in the other any supremely excellent poet was styled by his admirers "Poet Laureate." Skill in Latin versification was the only qualification necessary for the distinction of Laureate-graduate. The names we find in this connection are Maurice Byrchenshaw and John Skelton. Skelton seems to have been specially proud of his title. He calls himself, in the headings of his Latin poems, "Poeta Skelton Laureatus," and never lets slip any opportunity of drawing his reader's attention to the fact that—

> "A King to me the habit gave
> At Oxford the University."

But it is in its other signification that the term is most familiar to students of the early English poets. Thus Chaucer, in his "Clerk's Prologue," calls Petrarch "the laureate poete"—although in this passage

there may be a special reference to the well-known coronation of Petrarch with the laurel crown ; and both Chaucer and Gower are addressed by King James as—

> "Superlative as poetes laureate
> In rhetorique and eloquence ornate."

Jonson was the first poet who was appointed to the office, so far as our proofs go, by letters patent. The theory, founded on the annuity of £50 granted to Spenser in 1591, that the great Court-poet of Elizabeth's age was the first regularly appointed Laureate, has no certain foundation ; nor was the office held after 1599 by Samuel Daniel identical with the Laureateship.

LIST OF POETS LAUREATE.

Ben Jonson	1619–1637
(Interregnum)	
Sir William D'Avenant	1660–1668
John Dryden *	1670–1689
Thomas Shadwell	1689–1692
Nahum Tate	1692–1715
Nicholas Rowe	1715–1718
Lawrence Eusden, Clerk †	1718–1730
Colley Cibber	1730–1757
William Whitehead	1757–1785
Thomas Warton, Clerk	1785–1790
Henry James Pye ‡	1790–1813
Robert Southey	1813–1843
William Wordsworth	1843–1850
Alfred Tennyson	1850–1892
(Interregnum)	
Alfred Austin	1895

At Jonson's appointment the annual salary was fixed at 100 marks, which, on Ben's well-known rhyming petition to "the best of monarchs, masters, men, King Charles," was raised to the same number of pounds sterling, and to this was added at the same time the annual gift of a tierce of Ben's favourite wine, Canary. With this office Jonson held the post, which he afterwards lost, of city chronologer, with an annual salary of 100 nobles ; and Dryden added £100 to his income as Historiographer Royal. The presentation of the butt of wine, as all readers of Macaulay know, was discontinued by James II, but must have been resumed afterwards. We find it commuted for £27 in Pye's laureateship. In the time of the Georges the Laureate was expected to present an annual ode to the King on the royal birthday. Cowper, in his "Table Talk," refers to this as—

> "His quit-rent ode, his peppercorn of praise."

* Dryden did not receive his letters patent until the year 1670, but was paid his salary for the two preceding years.

† For Eusden, see 'Dunciad,' i. 63 ; and for Cibber, see same work *passim*.

‡ "Better to err with Pope than shine with Pye"—Byron in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*.

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